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WHAT IF™ THE HULK® HAD BECOME A BARBARIAN?

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THIS IS THE WHOLE PACKAGE... SCI-FI, FANTASY, AND HULK-POUNDING *ACTION!*

JB/AM

Stan Lee PRESENTS: A STUNNING SAGA OF AN ALTERNATE REALITY!

WHAT IF... HULK'S GIRLFRIEND JARELLA HAD NOT DIED?

PETER GILLIS, SCRIPT | HERB TRIMPE, PENCILS | MIKE ESPOSITO, INKS | TOM ORZECHOWSKI, lettering | GAFF, coloring | O'NEIL/GRUENWALD, EDITORS | JIM SHOOTER, Ed-in-CHIEF

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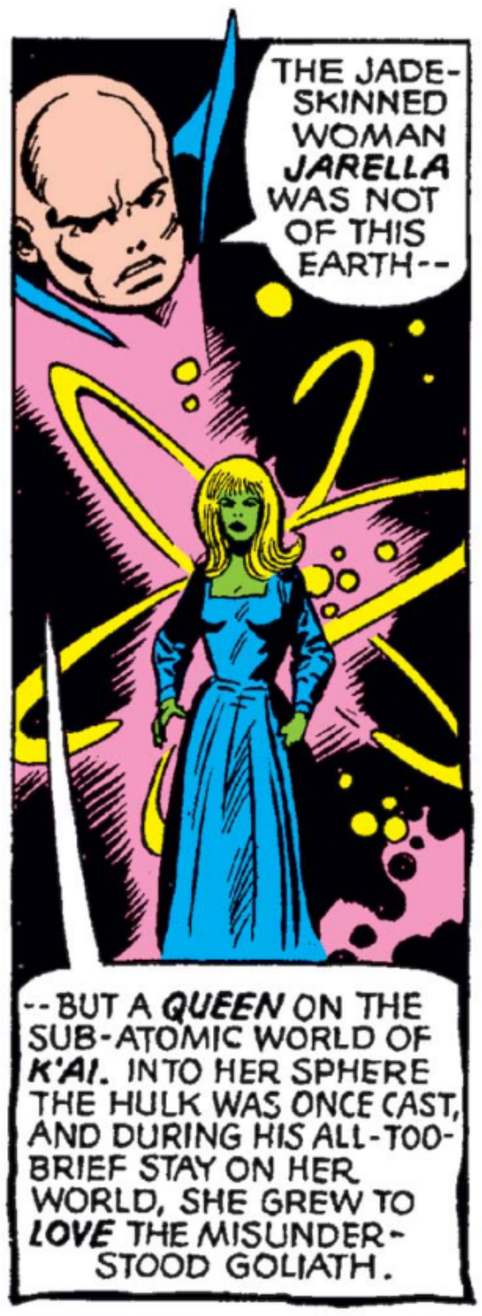
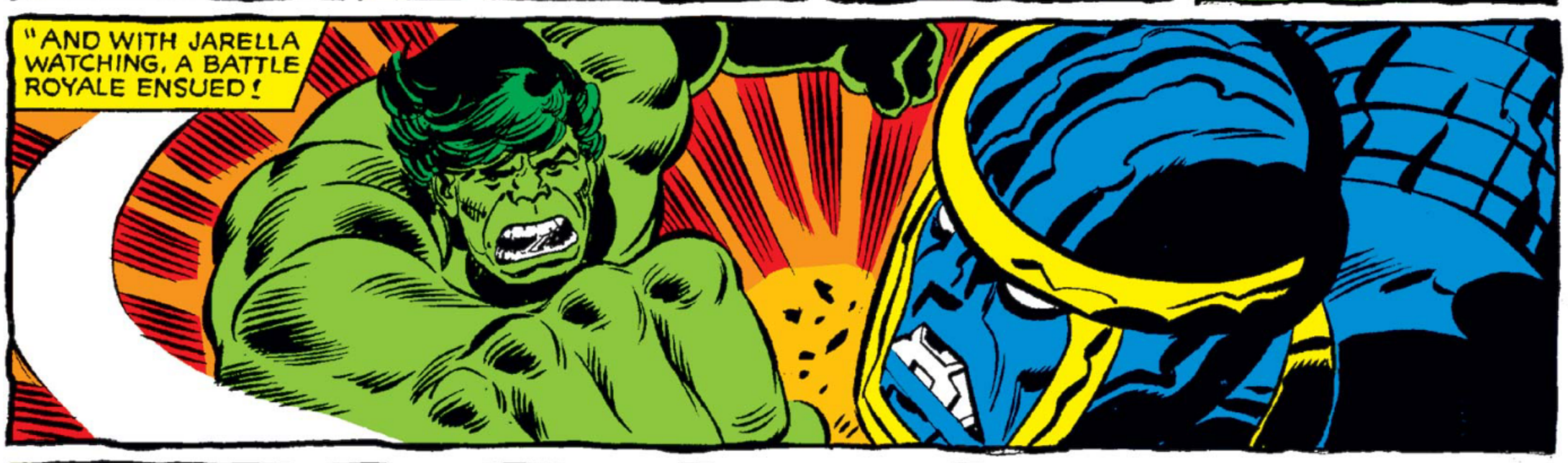

THE JADE-SKINNED WOMAN JARELLA WAS NOT OF THIS EARTH--
--BUT A QUEEN ON THE SUB-ATOMIC WORLD OF K'AI. INTO HER SPHERE THE HULK WAS ONCE CAST, AND DURING HIS ALL-TOO-BRIEF STAY ON HER WORLD, SHE GREW TO LOVE THE MISUNDERSTOOD GOLIATH.

"THEN, ON ONE OF THE HULK'S RETURN VISITS TO JARELLA'S WORLD... *
WE'VE DONE IT, GENERAL ROSS! WE'VE MANAGED TO REVERSE THE PROCESS BY WHICH WE SHRANK THE HULK!
YES, SAMSON, BUT IT SEEMS WE'VE UNSHRUNK SOMEONE ELSE AS WELL!
*HULK #203:-- D/M.

"MOREOVER, THE SLIDE WHICH SEEMINGLY CONTAINED K'AI HAD BEEN SHATTERED, STRANDING JARELLA ON EARTH.

"DAYS LATER, A MURDEROUS ROBOT CALLED THE CRYPTO-MAN CROSSED THE HULK'S PATH--
BAN

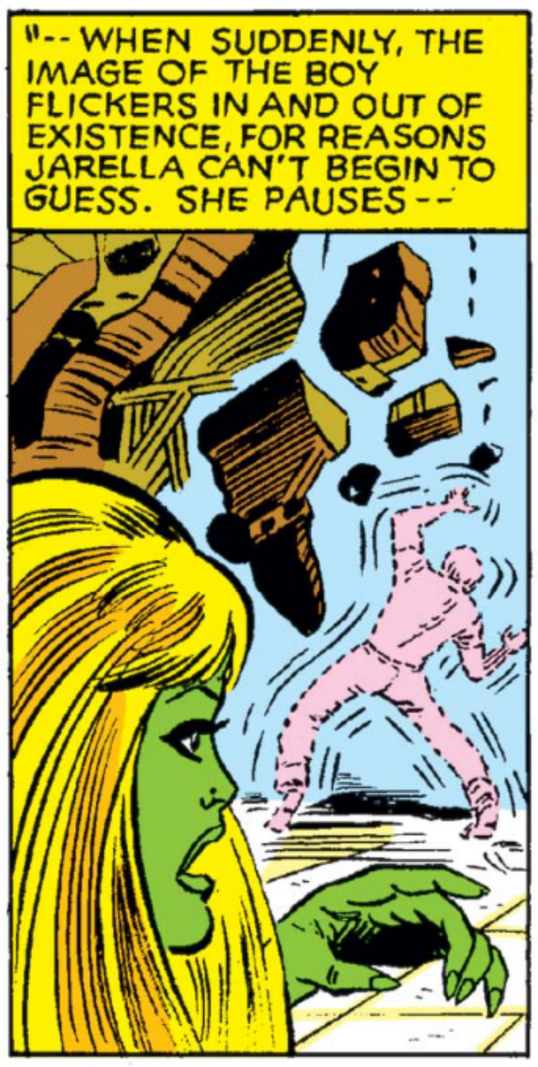

"AND WITH JARELLA WATCHING, A BATTLE ROYALE ENSUED!

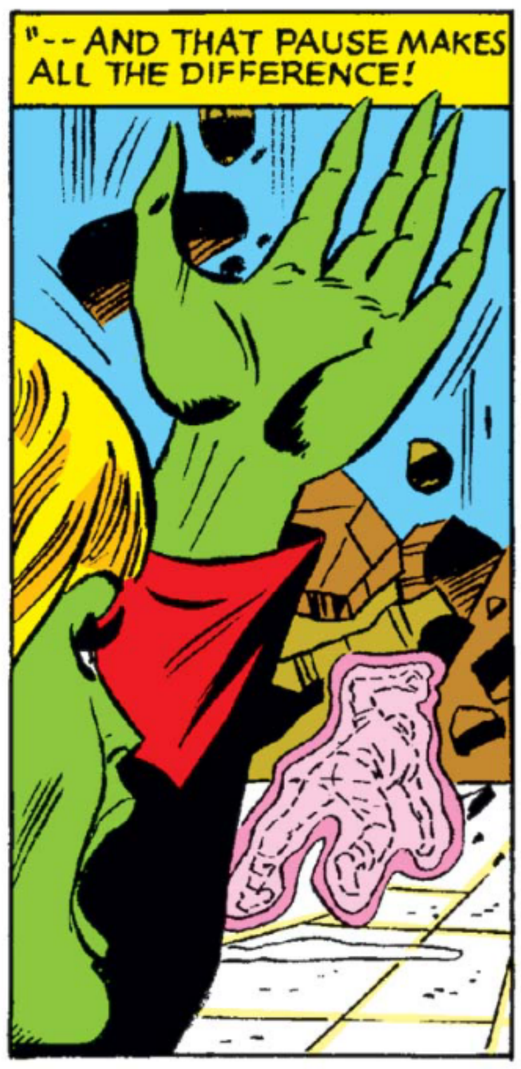
"THE FORCE OF THE FIGHT CAUSED A WALL TO COLLAPSE OVER A LITTLE BOY...

"AND, SELFLESSLY, JARELLA PUSHED THE BOY TO SAFETY, BEARING THE BRUNT HERSELF--

"--AND THUS SHE PERISHED."

BUT SUCH A CRITICAL POINT IN TIME HAS MORE THAN ONE POSSIBLE OUTCOME. ONE ALTERNATE PATH BEGINS IN THIS WAY...
JARELLA SEES THE BOY--


"-- WHEN SUDDENLY, THE IMAGE OF THE BOY FLICKERS IN AND OUT OF EXISTENCE, FOR REASONS JARELLA CAN'T BEGIN TO GUESS. SHE PAUSES --


"-- AND THAT PAUSE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

"JARELLA IS TOO LATE TO SAVE THE BOY -- TOO LATE TO SACRIFICE HERSELF --

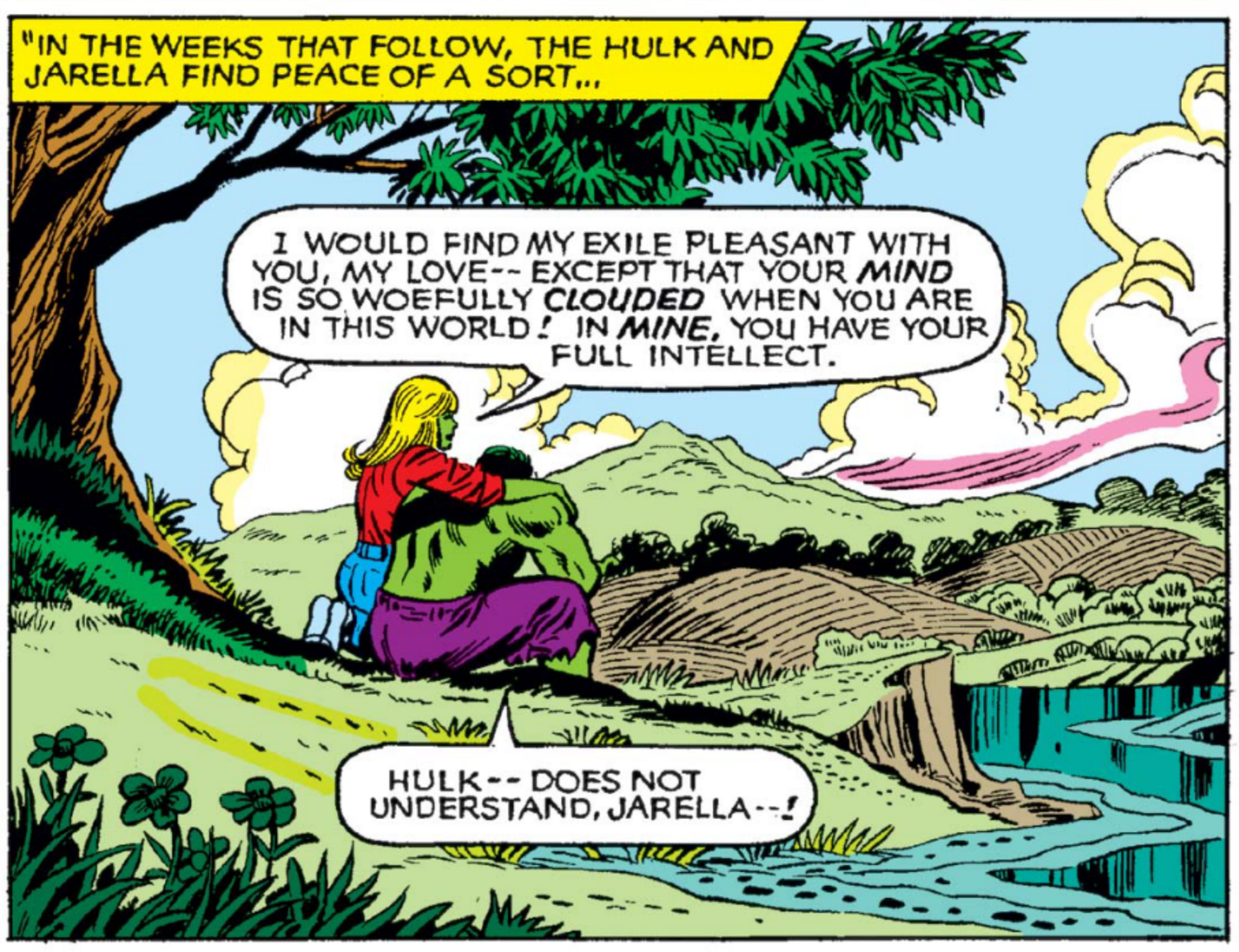
"AND SO ONE LIFE CONTINUES, WHILE ANOTHER -- ENDS?

"THE HULK DEMOLISHES THE CRYPTO-MAN --

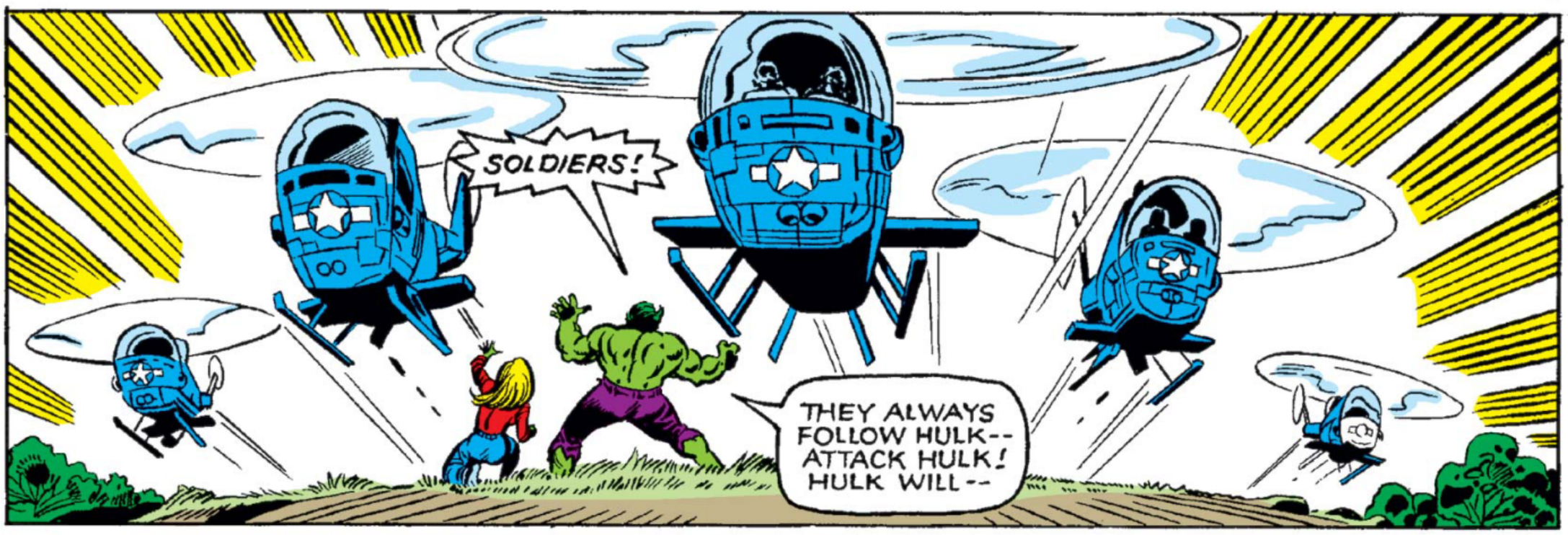
"-- AND THE FEEDBACK DESTROYS THE CONTROLS AND ITS ANONYMOUS CONTROLLER --
"-- IN A LABORATORY WHICH, ODDLY ENOUGH, CONTAINS A STRANGE IDOL!

DARLING, QUICK! THERE'S A LITTLE BOY UNDERNEATH THE RUBBLE!

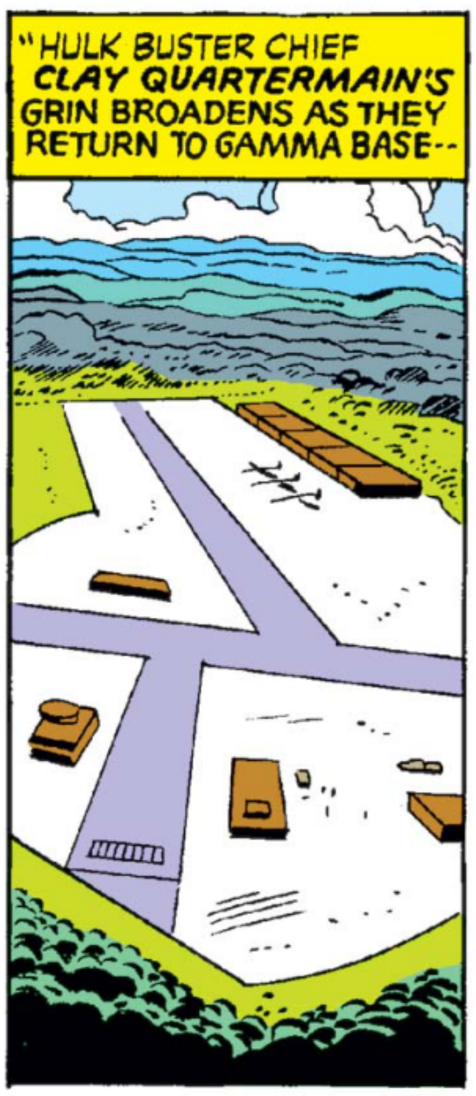
"BUT, DESPITE A THOROUGH SEARCH, THE HULK FINDS NO BODY -- NOTHING!
"IT IS A MYSTERY INDEED!

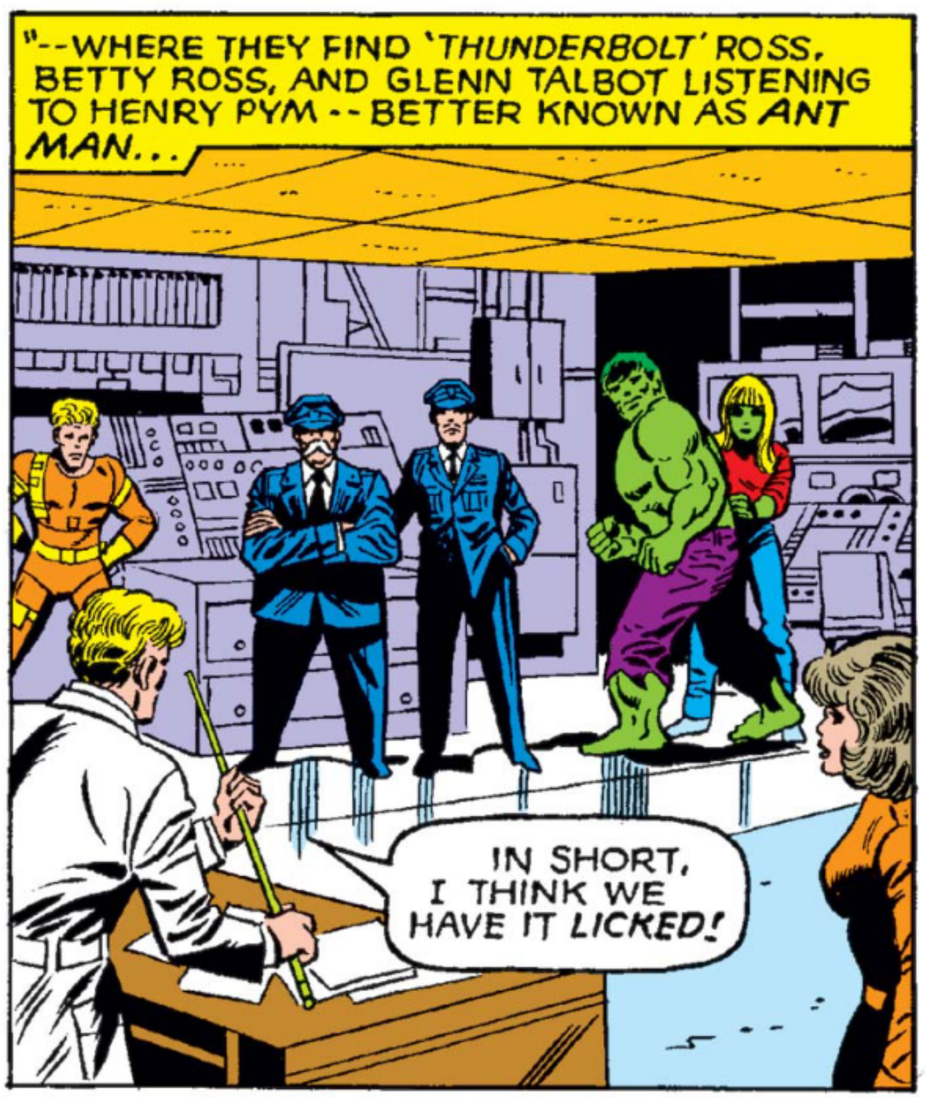

"IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOW, THE HULK AND JARELLA FIND PEACE OF A SORT...
I WOULD FIND MY EXILE PLEASANT WITH YOU, MY LOVE -- EXCEPT THAT YOUR MIND IS SO WOEFULLY CLOUDED WHEN YOU ARE IN THIS WORLD! IN MINE, YOU HAVE YOUR FULL INTELLECT.
HULK -- DOES NOT UNDERSTAND, JARELLA --!

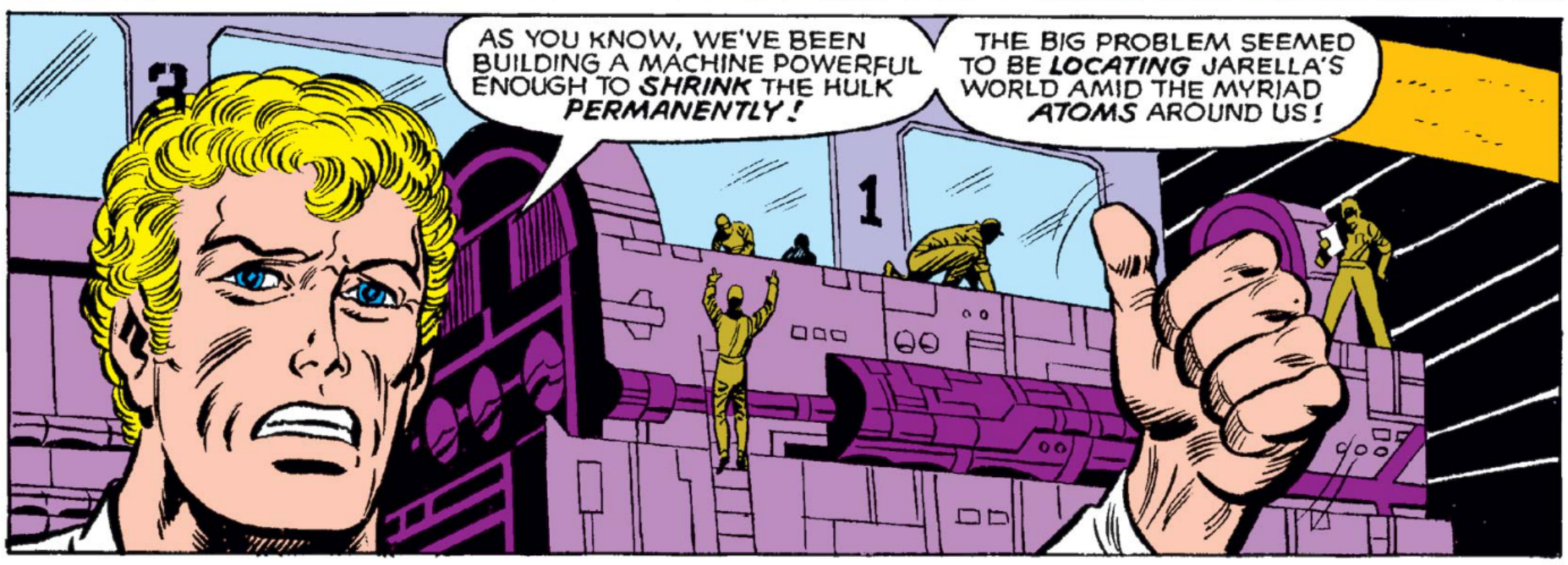
MY LOVE-- WHAT IS THAT SOUND?
HULK KNOWS THAT SOUND! IT IS--


SOLDIERS!
THEY ALWAYS FOLLOW HULK-- ATTACK HULK! HULK WILL--

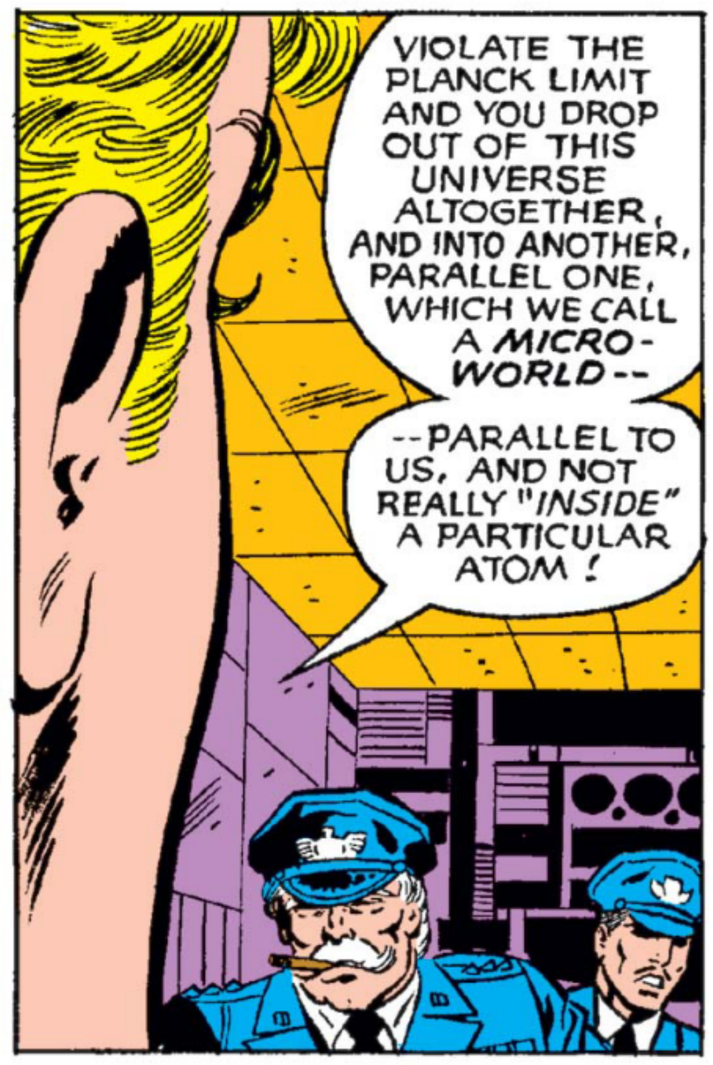
NOT THIS TIME, GREEN-SKIN! IF YOU AND THE LITTLE LADY WILL JUST HOP ABOARD--
--WE HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR YOU, FOR A CHANGE!


"HULK BUSTER CHIEF CLAY QUARTERMAIN'S GRIN BROADENS AS THEY RETURN TO GAMMA BASE--

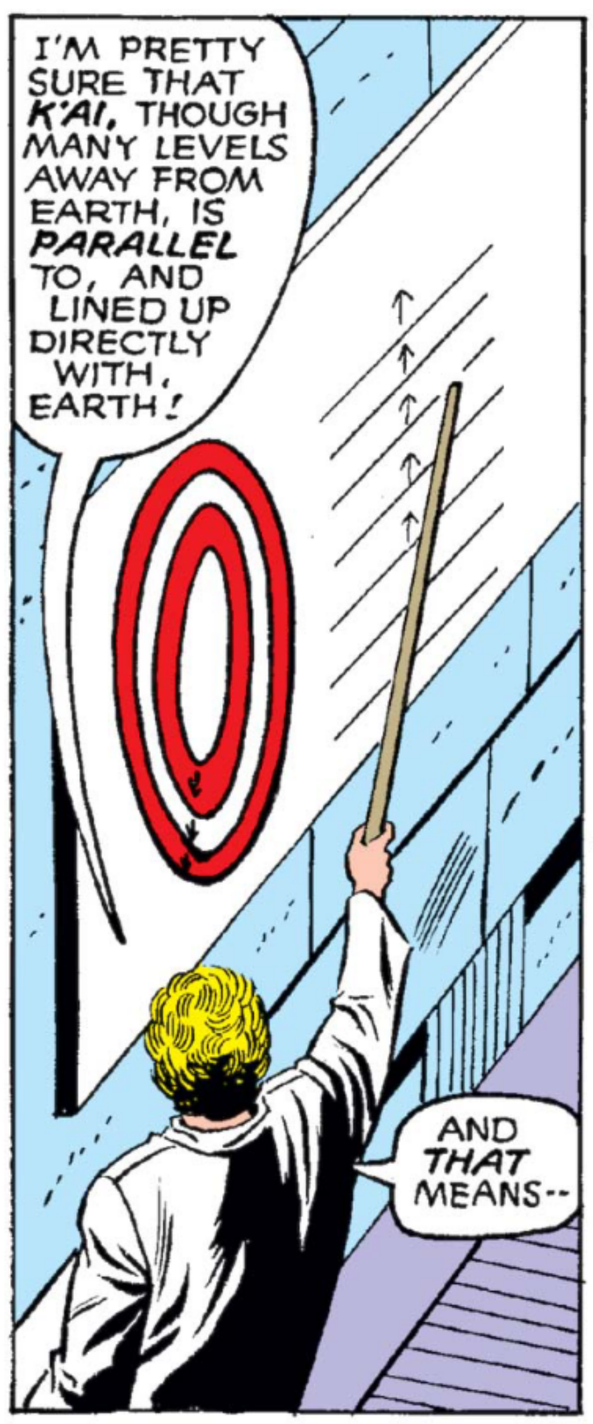

"--WHERE THEY FIND 'THUNDERBOLT' ROSS, BETTY ROSS, AND GLENN TALBOT LISTENING TO HENRY PYM -- BETTER KNOWN AS ANT MAN...
IN SHORT, I THINK WE HAVE IT LICKED!


AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE BEEN BUILDING A MACHINE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SHRINK THE HULK PERMANENTLY!
THE BIG PROBLEM SEEMED TO BE LOCATING JARELLA'S WORLD AMID THE MYRIAD ATOMS AROUND US!
3
1

THE THING IS, THE OLD "WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS" MODEL WE'VE BEEN USING NO LONGER WORKS!
QUANTUM MECHANICS STATES THERE IS A LOWER LIMIT TO SIZE-- PLANCK'S CONSTANT-- BELOW WHICH YOU JUST CAN'T GO!
IN THIS WORLD!


VIOLATE THE PLANCK LIMIT AND YOU DROP OUT OF THIS UNIVERSE ALTOGETHER, AND INTO ANOTHER, PARALLEL ONE, WHICH WE CALL A MICRO-WORLD--
--PARALLEL TO US, AND NOT REALLY "INSIDE" A PARTICULAR ATOM!

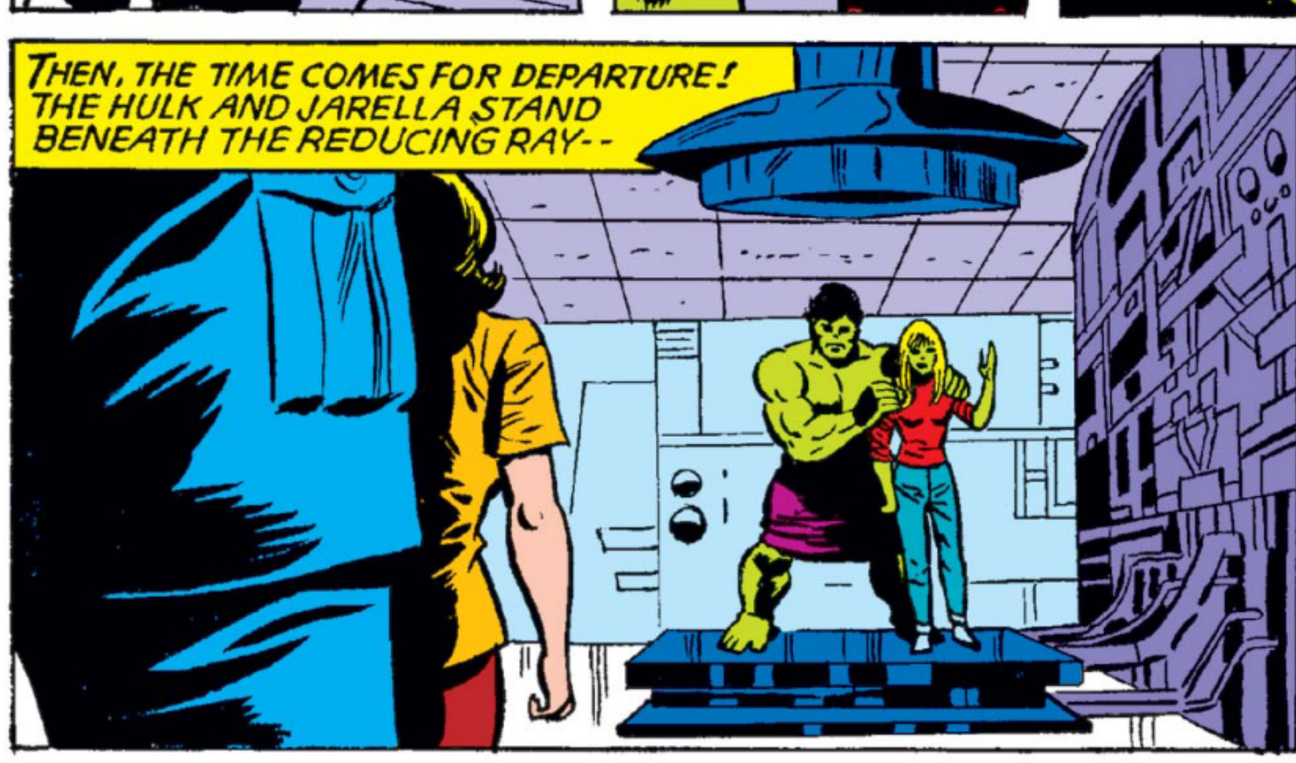
SO INSTEAD OF "WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS", WE HAVE "WORLDS BESIDE WORLDS", EACH WITH A DIFFERENT PLANCK CONSTANT!
I'M SORRY IF I'M BEING ABSTRUSE, BUT WHAT IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO IS THIS:

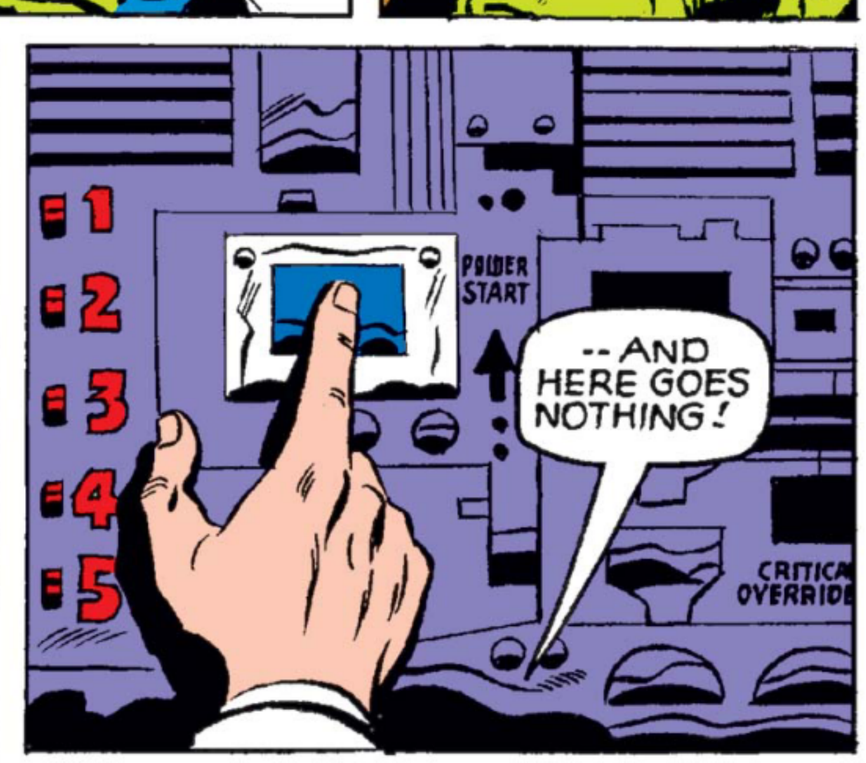

I'M PRETTY SURE THAT K'AI, THOUGH MANY LEVELS AWAY FROM EARTH, IS PARALLEL TO, AND LINED UP DIRECTLY WITH, EARTH!
AND THAT MEANS--

THAT MEANS, MY DARLING, THAT THEY CAN SEND US HOME AGAIN!

THEN, THE TIME COMES FOR GOODBYES!
I'M NO GOOD AT SPEECHES, JARELLA, BUT YOU'VE GIVEN TWO NIGHTMARES -- THE HULK'S AND MINE-- A HAPPY ENDING. THANKS.

GOODBYE, OLD FRIEND, FELLOW AVENGER, FELLOW DEFENDER: IT SEEMS, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, THAT THE UNIVERSE HAS FINALLY FOUND A PLACE FOR YOU.


THEN, THE TIME COMES FOR DEPARTURE! THE HULK AND JARELLA STAND BENEATH THE REDUCING RAY--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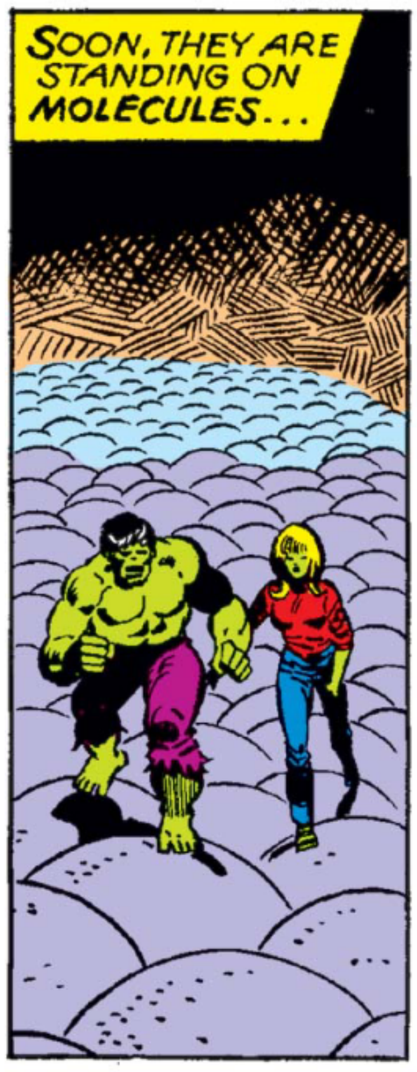
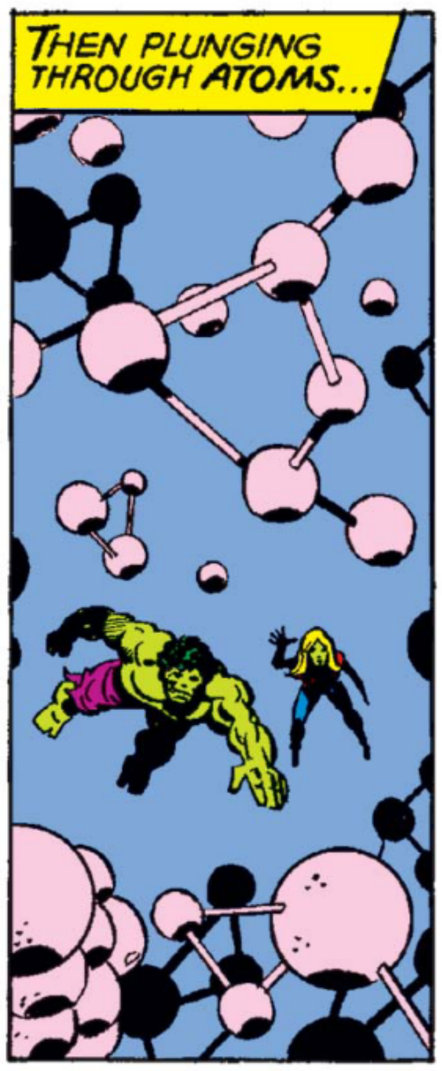
POWER START
--AND HERE GOES NOTHING!

THE PROCESS BEGIN SLOWLY...
GOOD-BYE, ROSS--

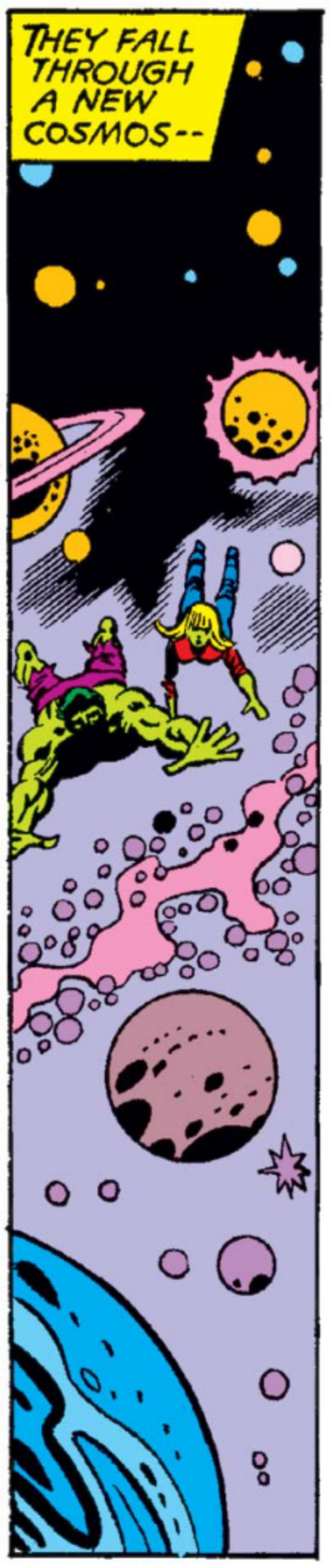
AND THEN ACCELERATES...
HULK DID NOT HATE YOU... REALLY--!

UNTIL THEY ARE LOST TO SIGHT.


SOON, THEY ARE STANDING ON MOLECULES...


THEN PLUNGING THROUGH ATOMS...

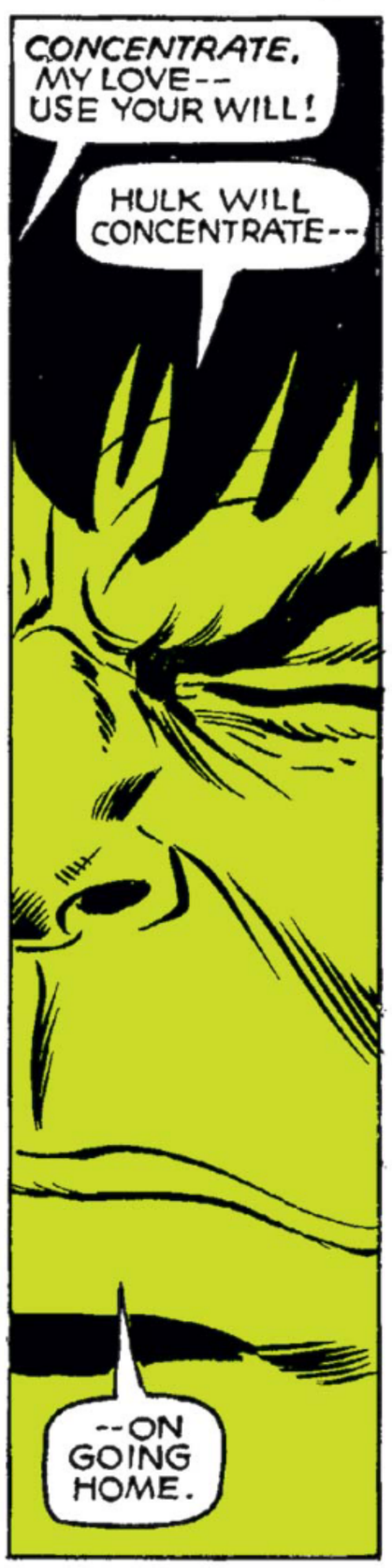
UNTIL THEY DROP THROUGH THE VERY FABRIC OF OUR UNIVERSE--
-- LIKE GRAINS OF SAND THROUGH A SIEVE!


THEY FALL THROUGH A NEW COSMOS--

--EVER SHRINKING...

SUDDENLY, THE TWO MATERIALIZE ON THE SURFACE OF A PLANET, THEIR SHRINKING HALTED...
THIS IS NOT JARELLA'S WORLD!

SOME FORCE IS SLOWING US DOWN-- TRYING TO KEEP US HERE! BUT WE MUST GO ON! WE HAVE TO FIGHT IT!
HULK WILL FIGHT! HOW?


CONCENTRATE, MY LOVE-- USE YOUR WILL!
HULK WILL CONCENTRATE--
--ON GOING HOME.

PAST THE WRECKAGE THAT WAS ONCE THE ARCH-VILLAIN HYPERION'S WORLD...

PAST THE STRANGE DOMAIN CALLED THE MICROVERSE...

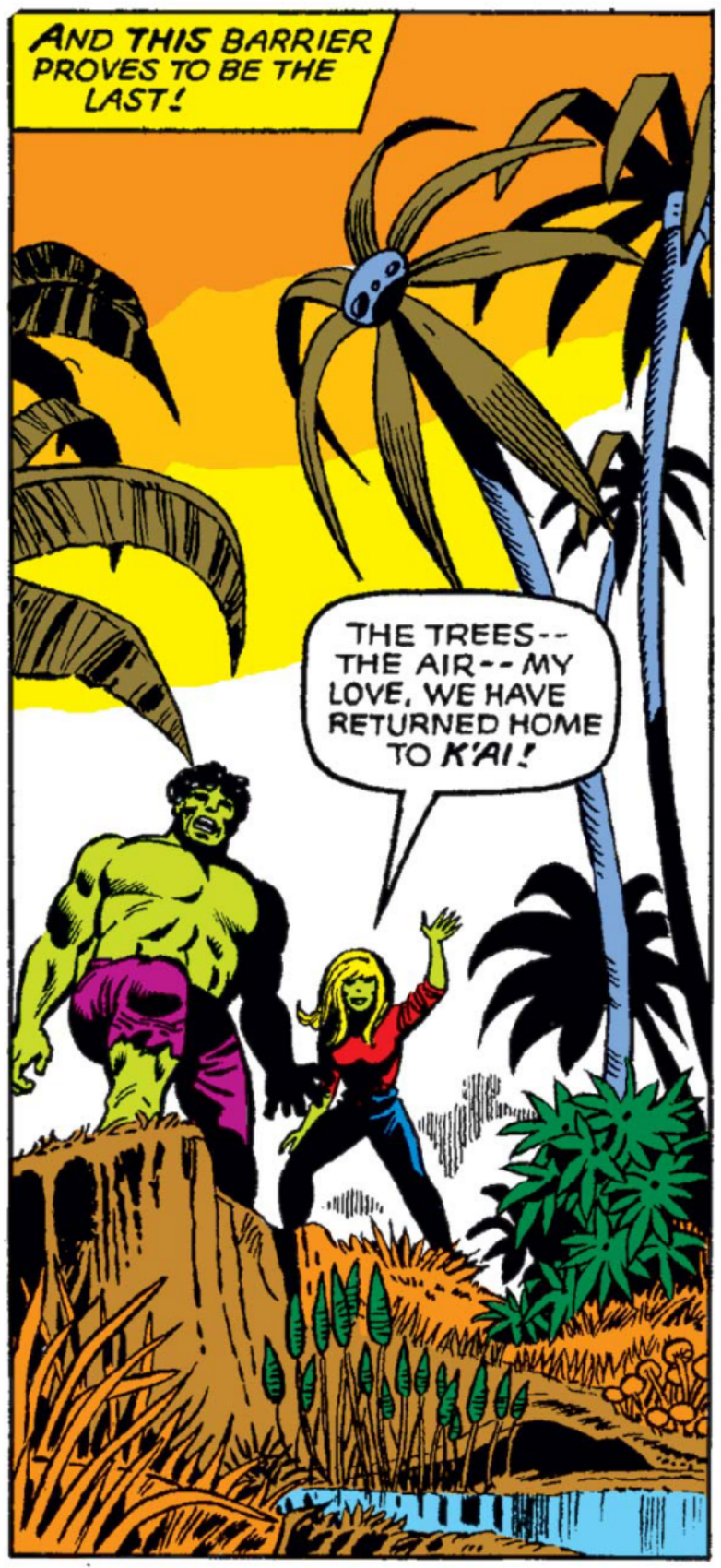
THE SAVAGE SPLENDOR OF TARRACONIA...

AND THE TOWERS OF PSYCHO-MAN'S REALM THEY HURTLE!*

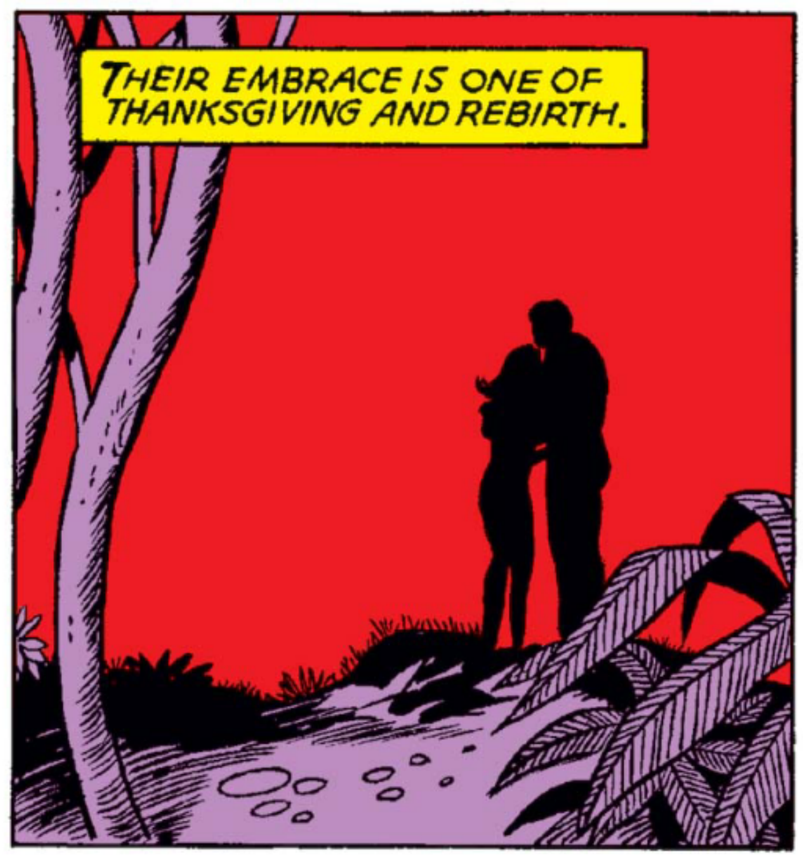
EACH TIME, THE RESISTANCE GROWS *STRONGER!* SOMETHING IS TRYING TO *KEEP US* FROM K'AI!

PAST THE MICRO-WORLD THAT THE EARTH-TYRANT DR. DOOM ONCE RULED...

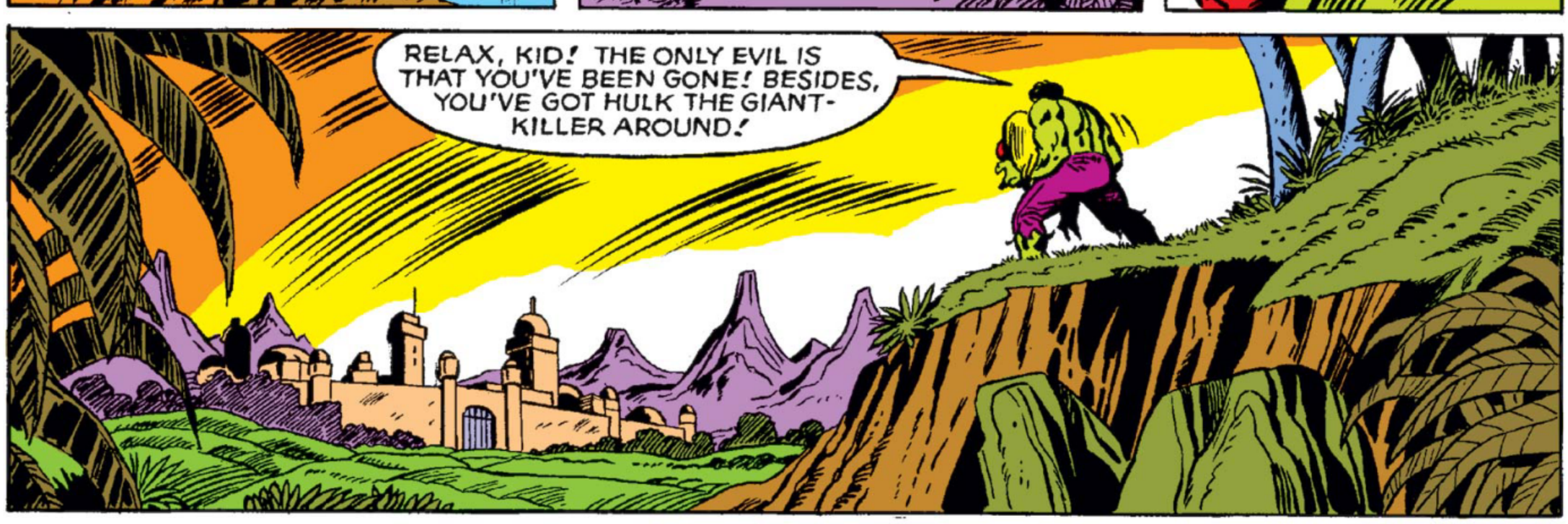
*GIVE YOURSELF A COOKIE IF YOU CAN IDENTIFY WHERE ALL THESE MICROCOSMS APPEARED BEFORE:--O/M.

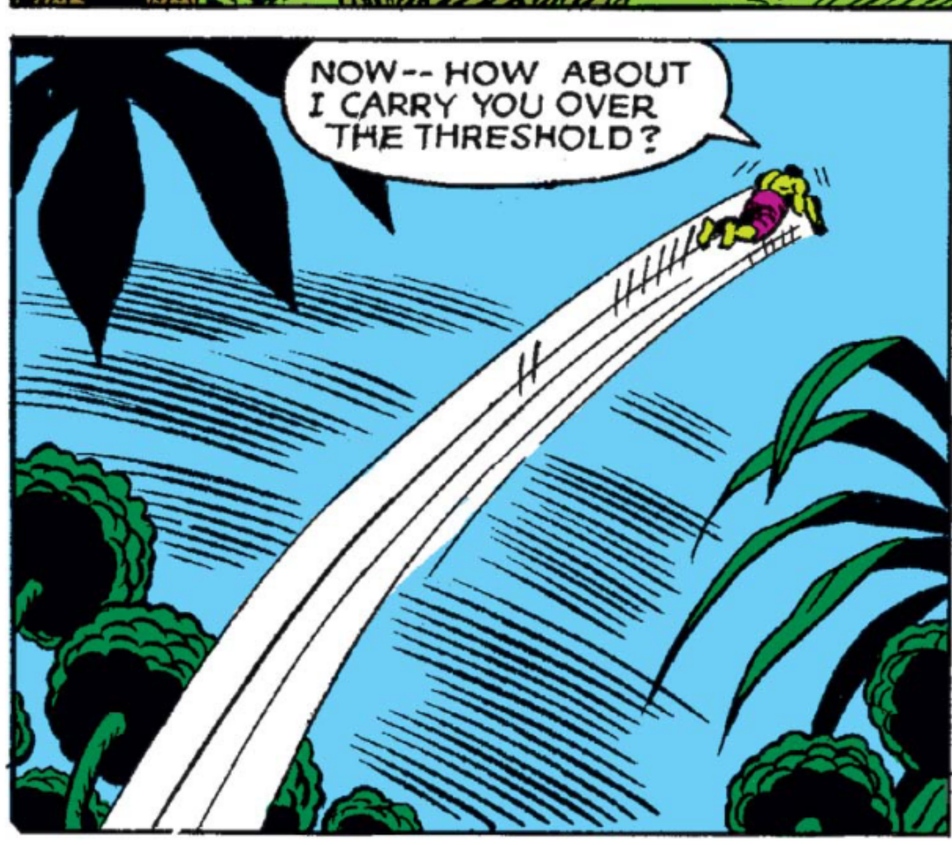

AND THIS BARRIER PROVES TO BE THE LAST!
THE TREES-- THE AIR-- MY LOVE, WE HAVE RETURNED HOME TO K'AI!

YES-- AND THE SPELL OF K'AI IS STILL IN EFFECT! I'VE GOT MY HUMAN BRAIN ONCE MORE-- THE MIND OF BRUCE BANNER!

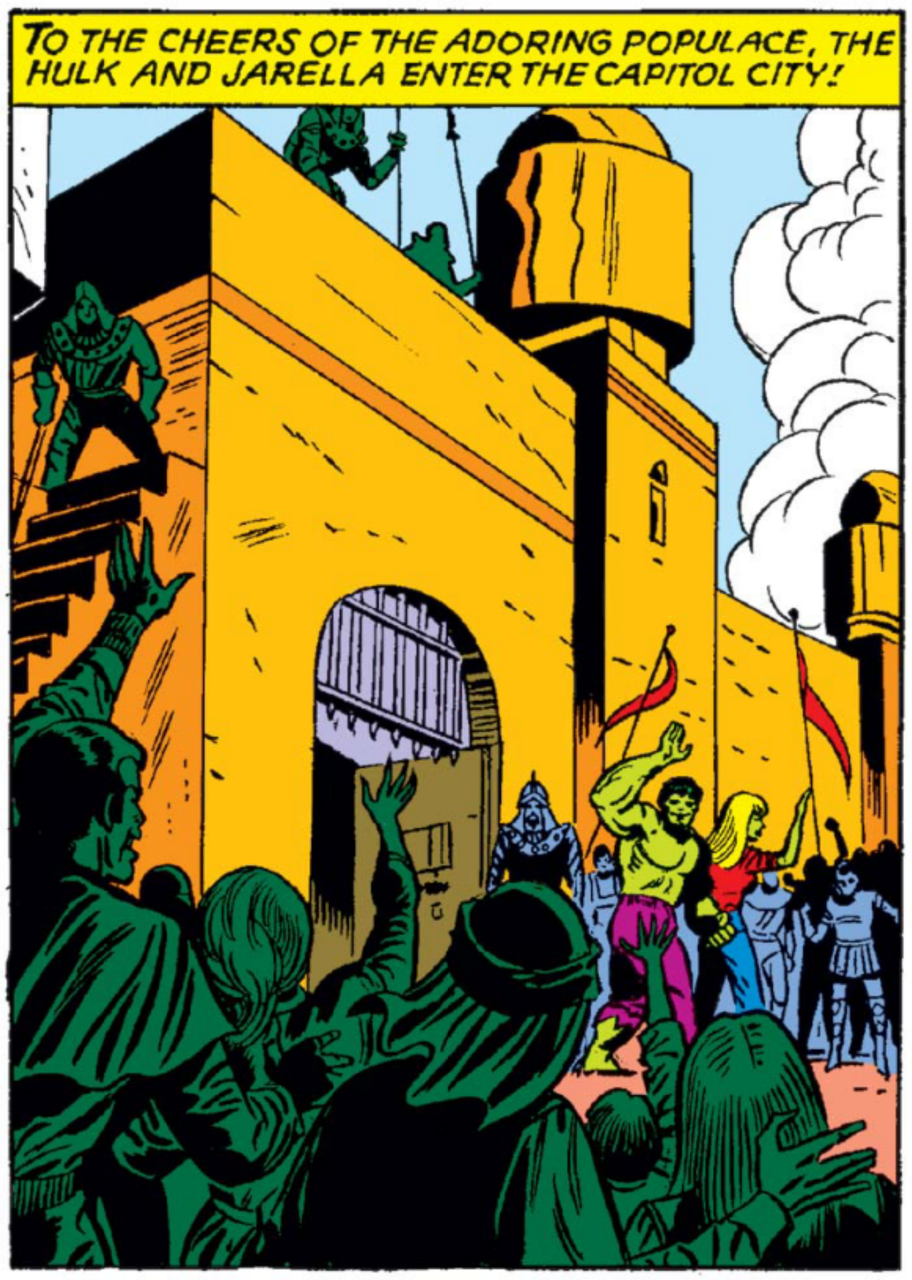

THEIR EMBRACE IS ONE OF THANKSGIVING AND REBIRTH.

BRUCE-- THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG! IT'S LIKE I SENSE A GROWING PRESENCE OF EVIL IN THE LAND!

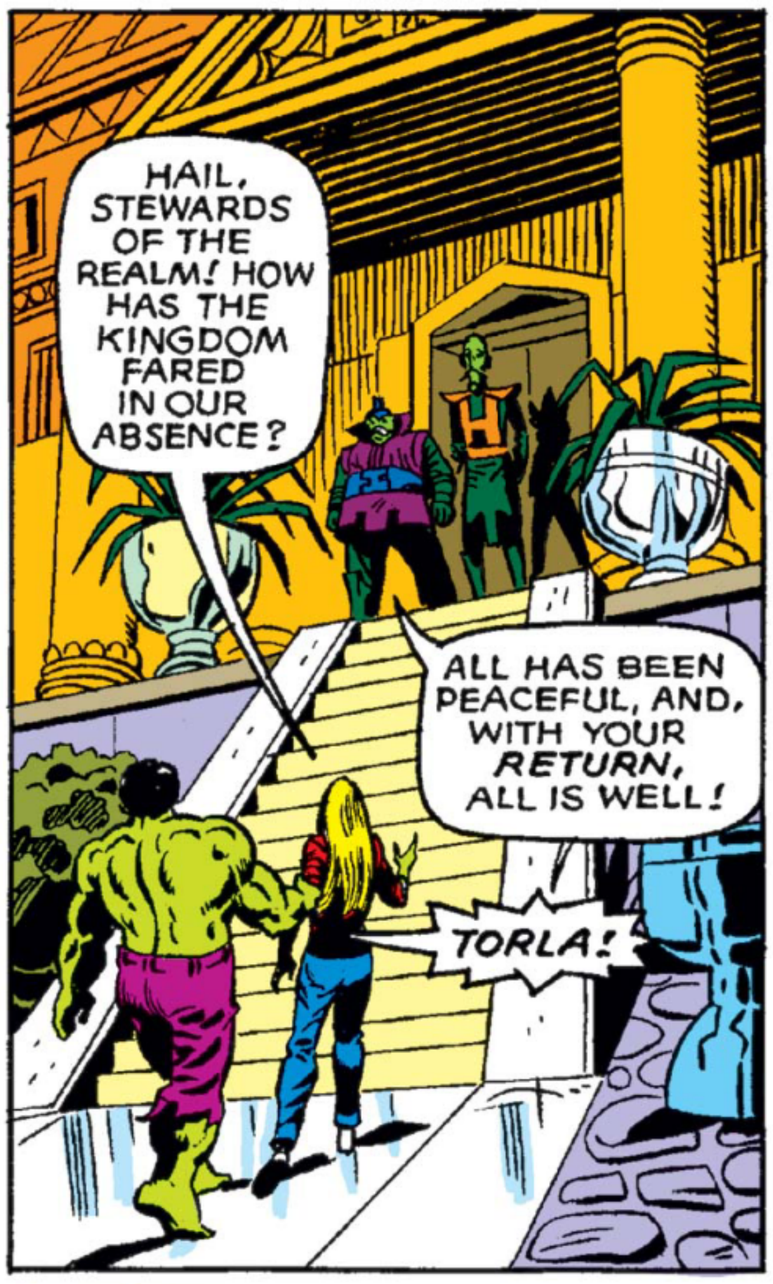

RELAX, KID! THE ONLY EVIL IS THAT YOU'VE BEEN GONE! BESIDES, YOU'VE GOT HULK THE GIANT-KILLER AROUND!

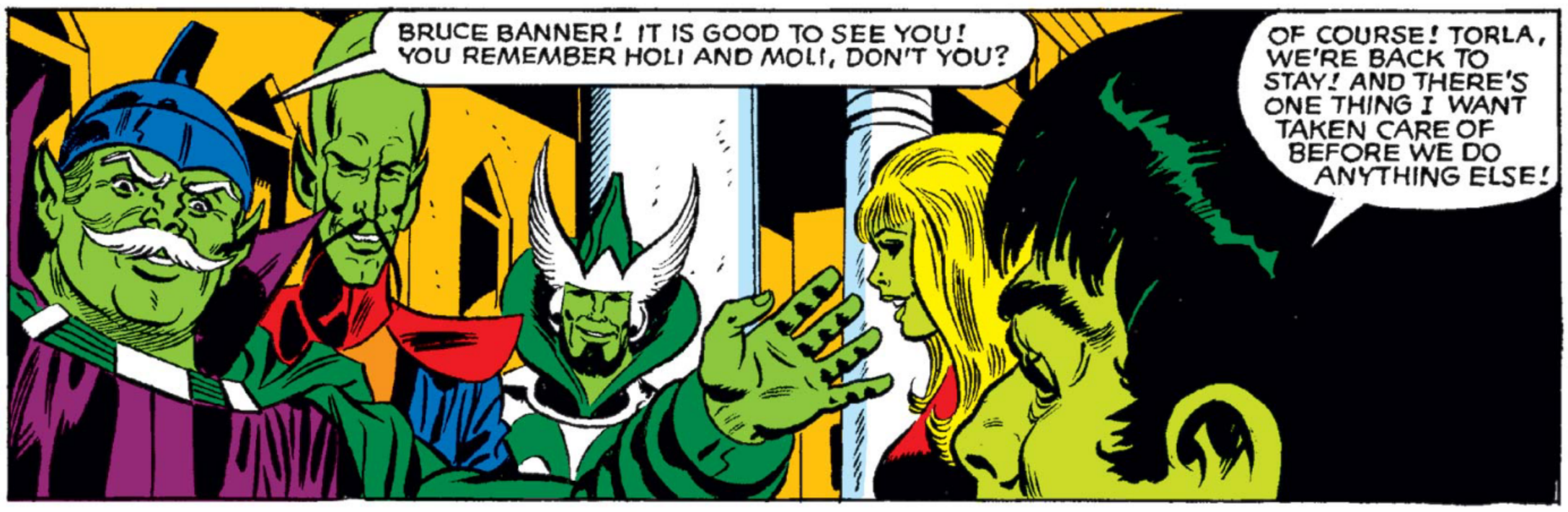

NOW-- HOW ABOUT I CARRY YOU OVER THE THRESHOLD?

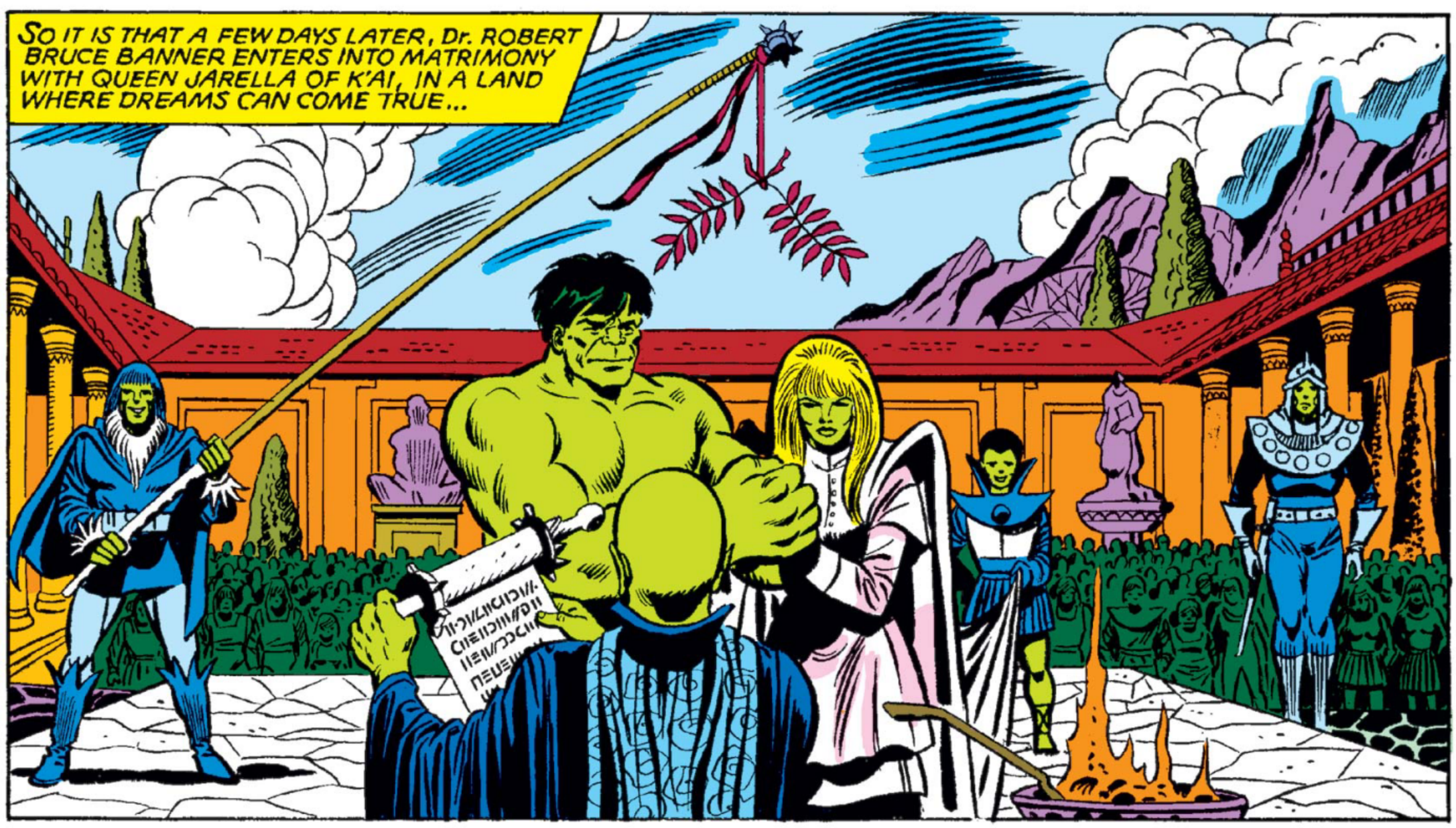
GODS OF K'AI! SPREAD THE WORD! OUR QUEEN RETURNS, AND THE HULK WITH HER!

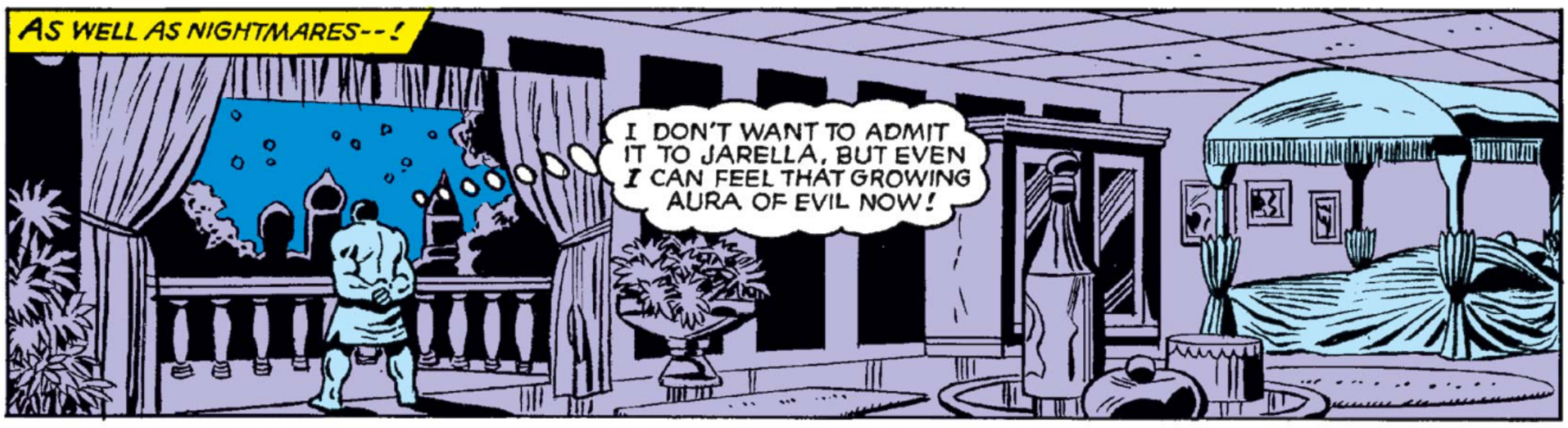

TO THE CHEERS OF THE ADORING POPULACE, THE HULK AND JARELLA ENTER THE CAPITOL CITY!

NOW DOES THIS LOOK EVIL?
YOU'RE RIGHT, MY LOVE. THIS IS--
--WONDERFUL.

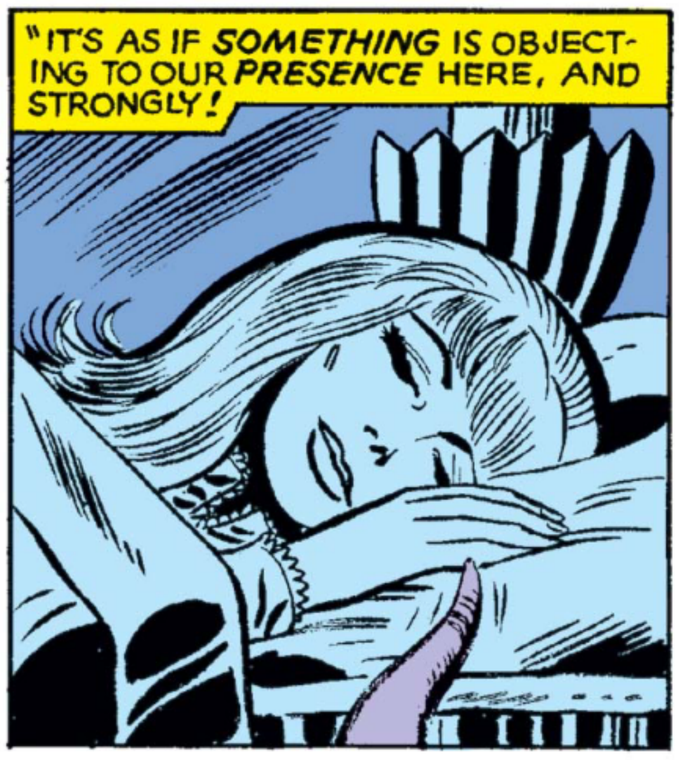

HAIL, STEWARDS OF THE REALM! HOW HAS THE KINGDOM FARED IN OUR ABSENCE?
ALL HAS BEEN PEACEFUL, AND, WITH YOUR RETURN, ALL IS WELL!
TORLA!


BRUCE BANNER! IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU! YOU REMEMBER HOLI AND MOLI, DON'T YOU?
OF COURSE! TORLA, WE'RE BACK TO STAY! AND THERE'S ONE THING I WANT TAKEN CARE OF BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE!


SO IT IS THAT A FEW DAYS LATER, Dr. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER ENTERS INTO MATRIMONY WITH QUEEN JARELLA OF K'AI, IN A LAND WHERE DREAMS CAN COME TRUE...


AS WELL AS NIGHTMARES--!
I DON'T WANT TO ADMIT IT TO JARELLA, BUT EVEN I CAN FEEL THAT GROWING AURA OF EVIL NOW!

"I ASKED TORLA, AND HE SAID IT BEGAN WHEN WE ARRIVED, NOT BEFORE!


"IT'S AS IF SOMETHING IS OBJECTING TO OUR PRESENCE HERE, AND STRONGLY!

"AND WHAT WORRIES ME IS THAT SOON IT'LL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO STRIKE!"

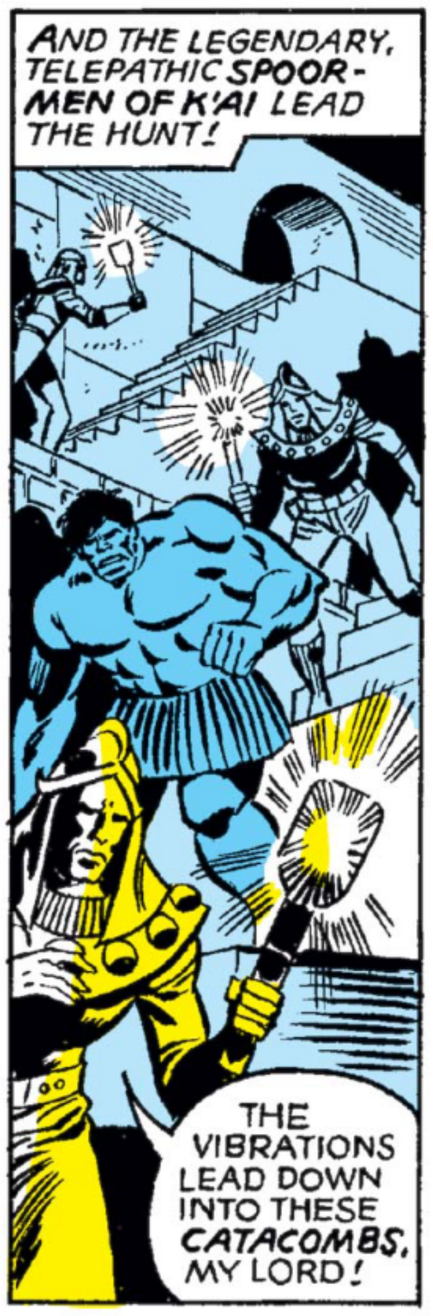
WAIT! WHAT'S THAT AWFUL SMELL?
GOOD LORD!

WHATEVER THAT THING CRAWLED OUT OF, IT'S GOT MY WIFE!

AND NOBODY DOES THAT TO THE HULK!
WHOOOM!

BRUCE! WHAT WAS THAT??
I DON'T KNOW, BUT SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF K'AI!
AND I INTEND TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT!

I'M GOING TO FIND WHATEVER SENT THAT THING! AND WHEN I DO--!

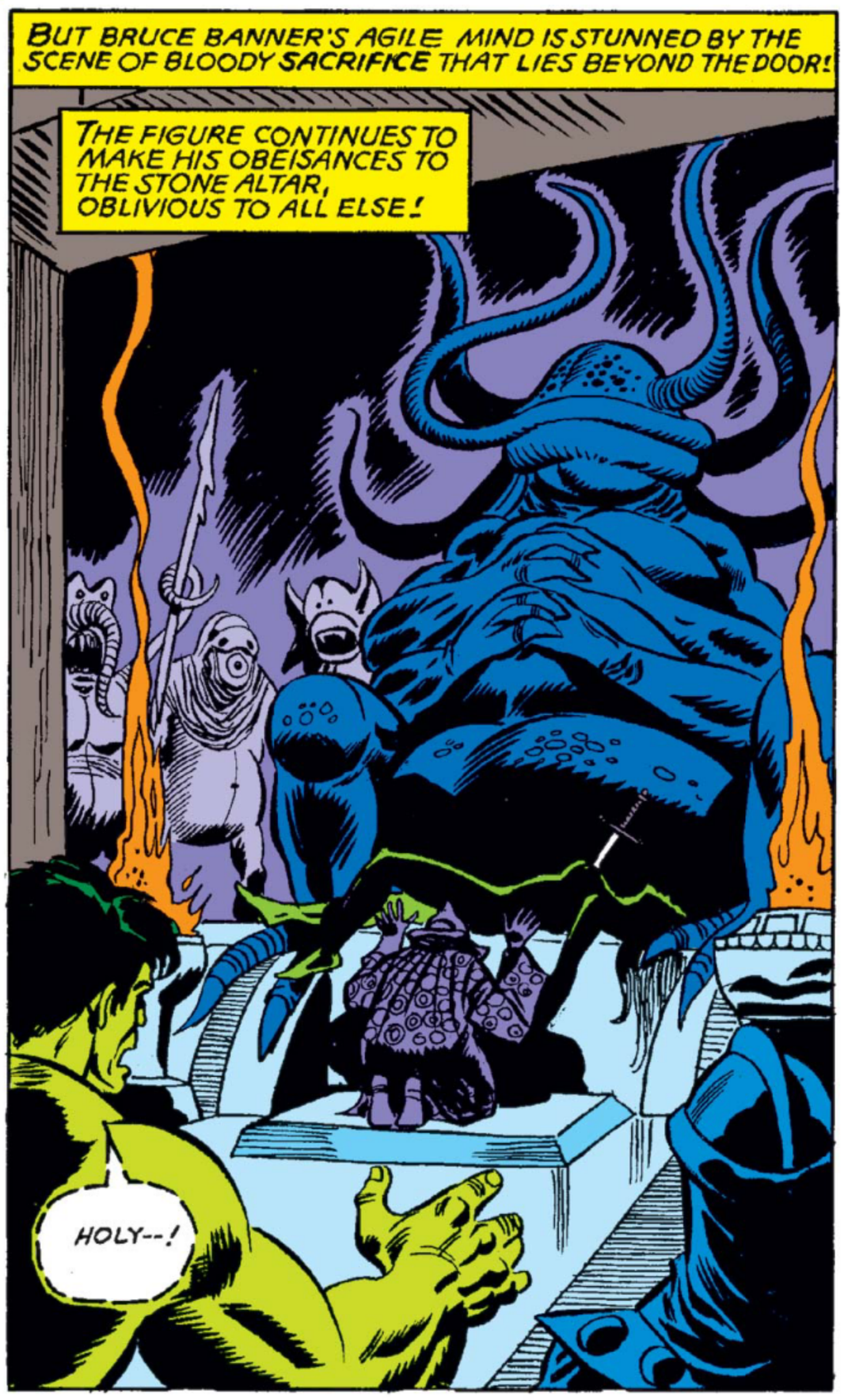

AND THE LEGENDARY, TELEPATHIC SPOOR-MEN OF K'AI LEAD THE HUNT!
THE VIBRATIONS LEAD DOWN INTO THESE CATACOMBS, MY LORD!

HERE IS A POOL OF SLIME SIMILAR TO THAT THING'S!

THE TRAIL LEADS TO THAT DOOR! WHAT'S BE-HIND IT?
I--DO NOT KNOW, MY LORD! IT HAS BEEN SHUT WITH AN ALL-POWERFUL SPELL!

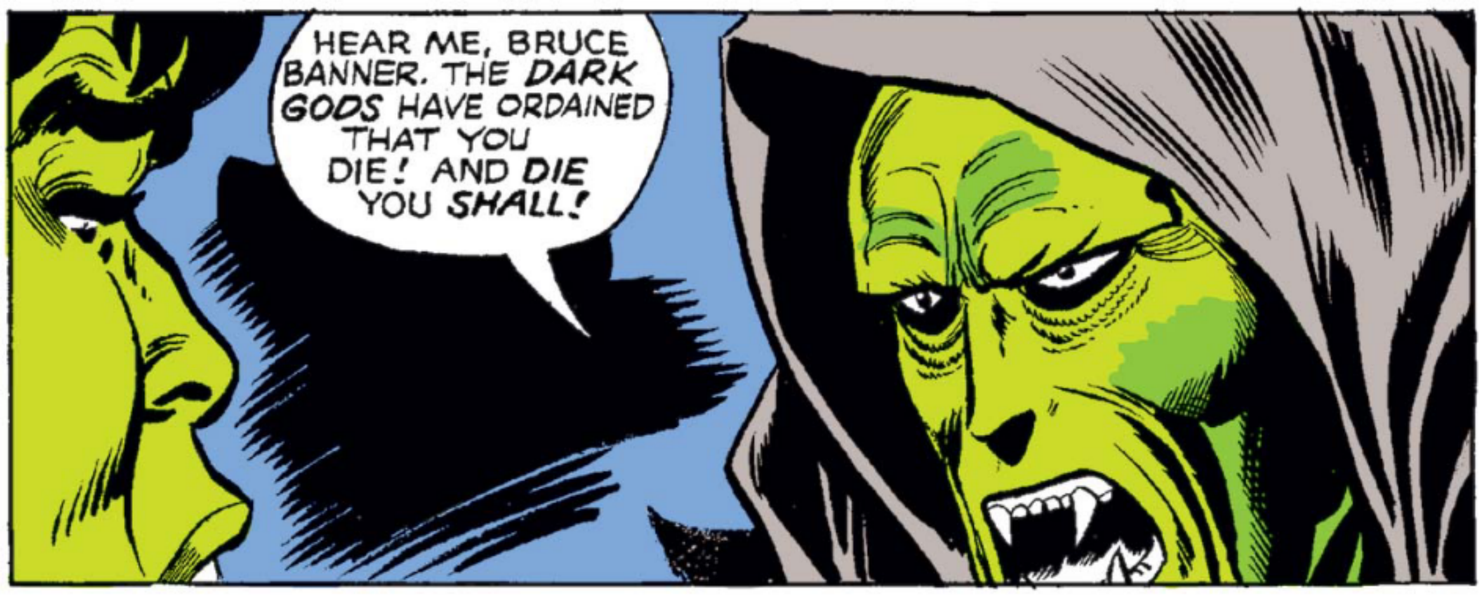
REMIND ME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT TERM "ALL POWER-FUL"! IT TENDS TO LOSE ITS MEANING--

--WHEN THE HULK IS AROUND!
WRAKK!


BUT BRUCE BANNER'S AGILE MIND IS STUNNED BY THE SCENE OF BLOODY SACRIFICE THAT LIES BEYOND THE DOOR!
THE FIGURE CONTINUES TO MAKE HIS OBEISANCES TO THE STONE ALTAR, OBLIVIOUS TO ALL ELSE!
HOLY--!

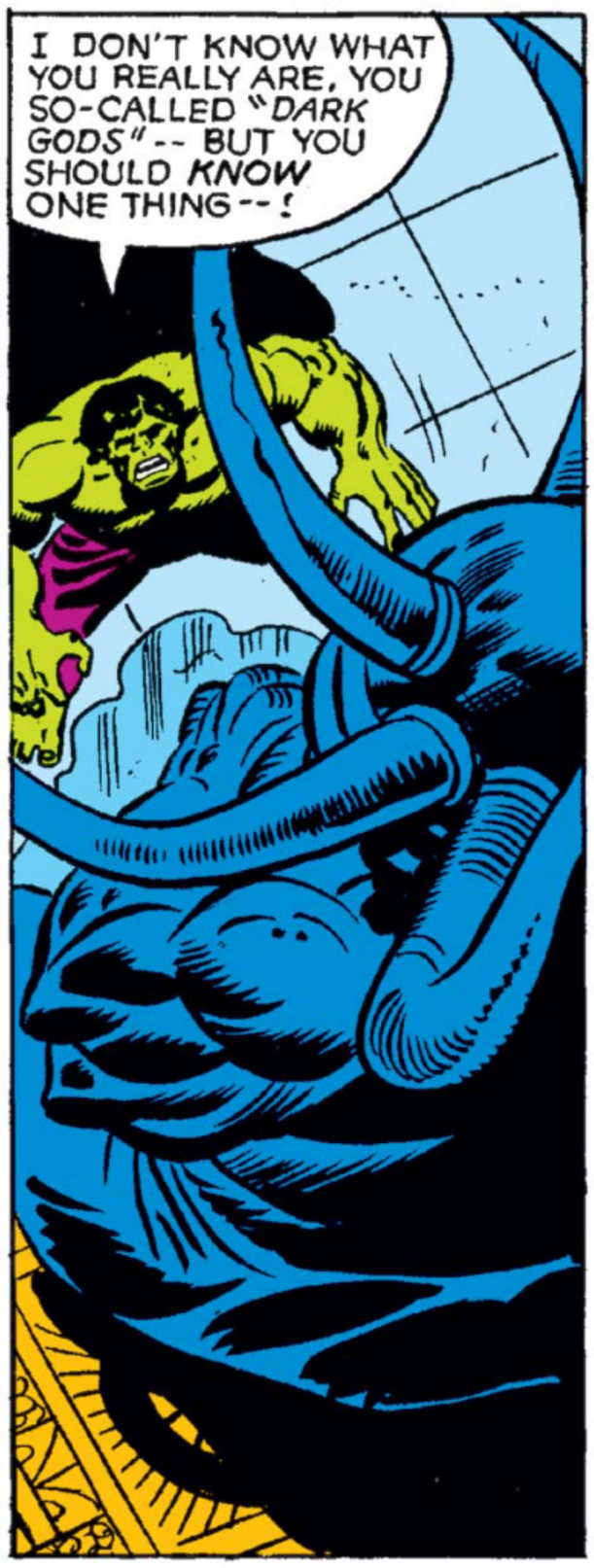
GET AWAY FROM THERE!

WHY DID YOU KILL THIS GIRL? WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO TO MY WIFE?? ANSWER ME!


HEAR ME, BRUCE BANNER. THE DARK GODS HAVE ORDAINED THAT YOU DIE! AND DIE YOU SHALL!

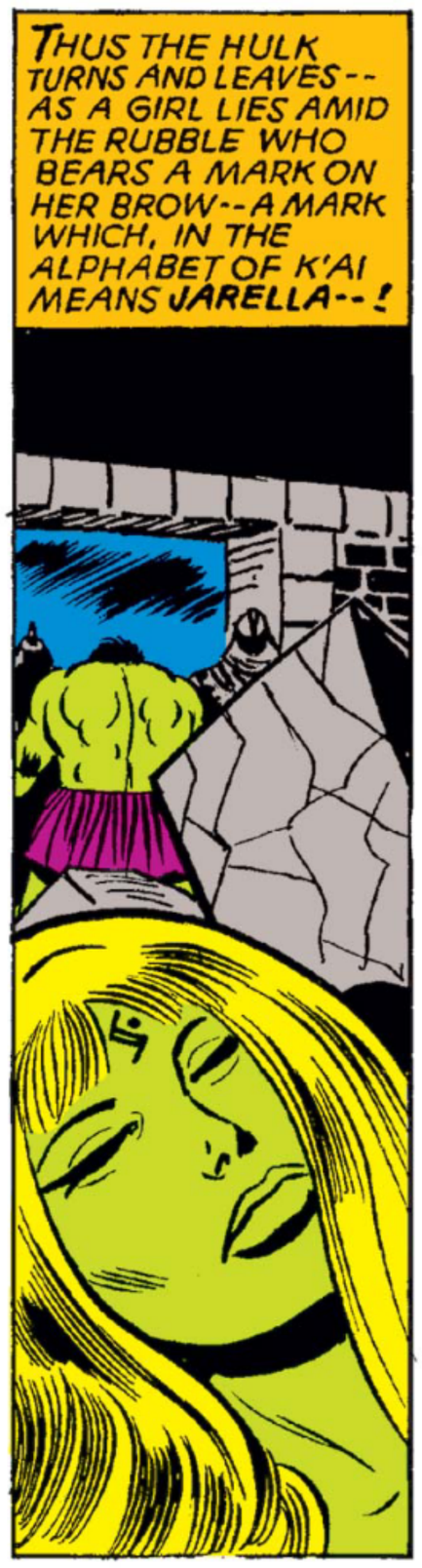
FAREWELL, HULK! WE SHALL MEET AGAIN-- BELOW...

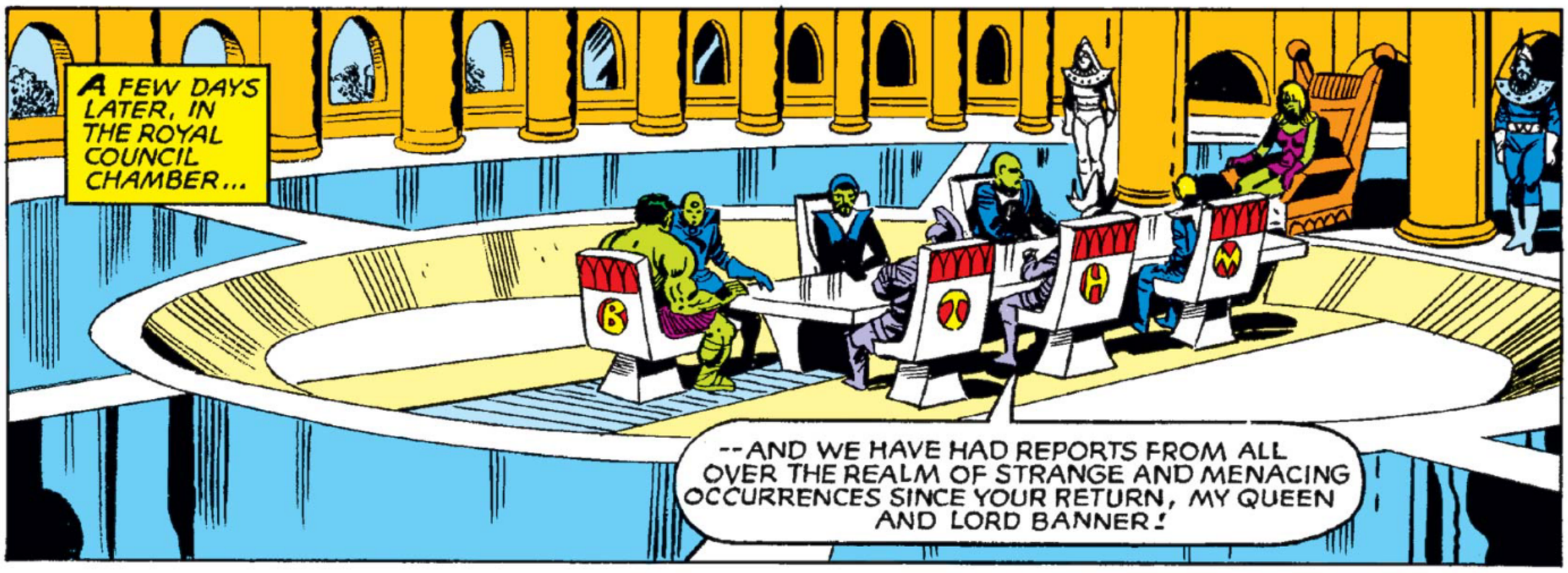
MELTED-- EVEN AS I WAS HOLDING HIM!


I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY ARE, YOU SO-CALLED "DARK GODS"-- BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW ONE THING--!

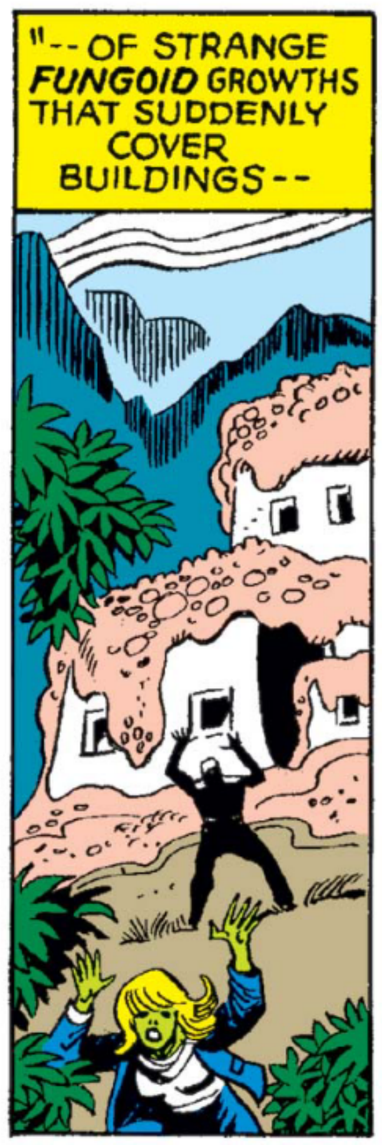
KA-DOOM!
THE POWER OF THE HULK IS GOING TO SMASH YOU!

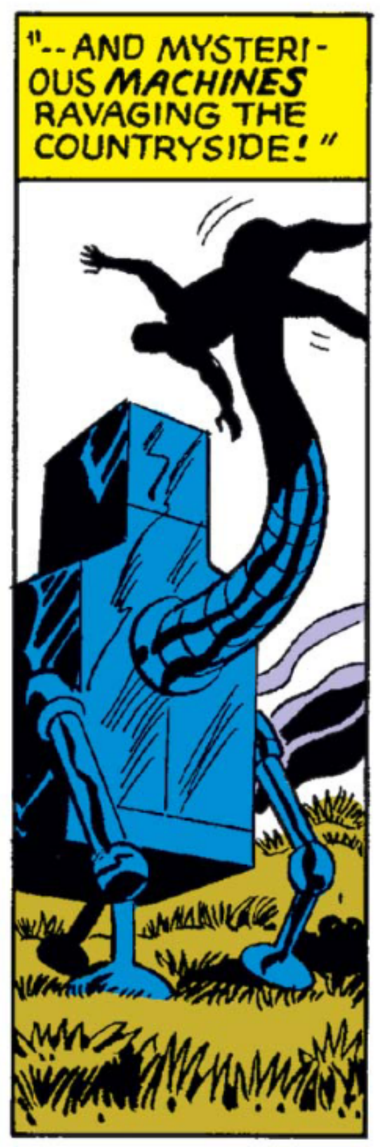
THIS-- WITH ALL HIS BEING-- THE HULK SWEARS!


THUS THE HULK TURNS AND LEAVES-- AS A GIRL LIES AMID THE RUBBLE WHO BEARS A MARK ON HER BROW--A MARK WHICH, IN THE ALPHABET OF K'AI MEANS JARELLA--!


A FEW DAYS LATER, IN THE ROYAL COUNCIL CHAMBER...
--AND WE HAVE HAD REPORTS FROM ALL OVER THE REALM OF STRANGE AND MENACING OCCURRENCES SINCE YOUR RETURN, MY QUEEN AND LORD BANNER!

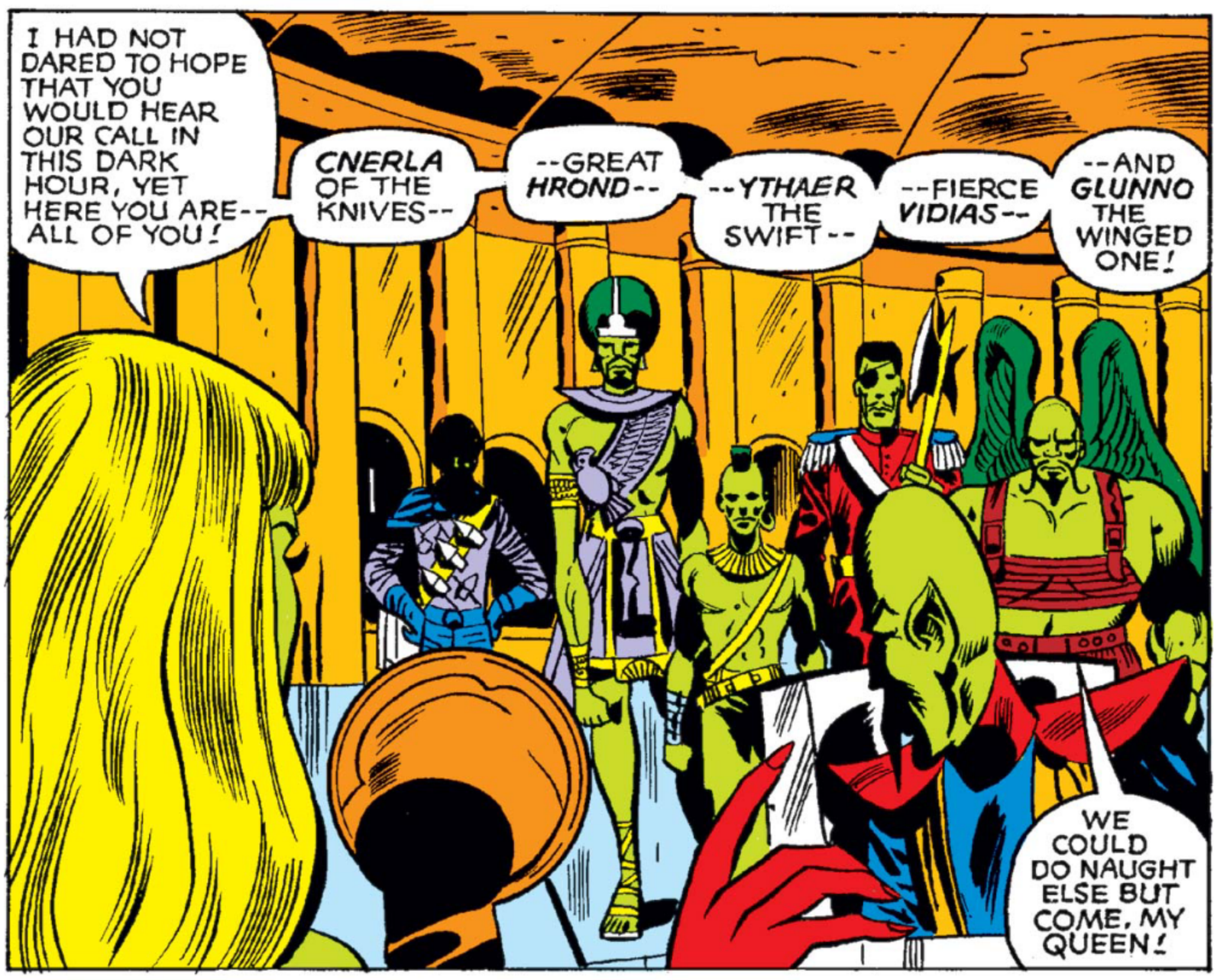
"WE HEAR OF THE DEAD RISING FROM THEIR GRAVES --

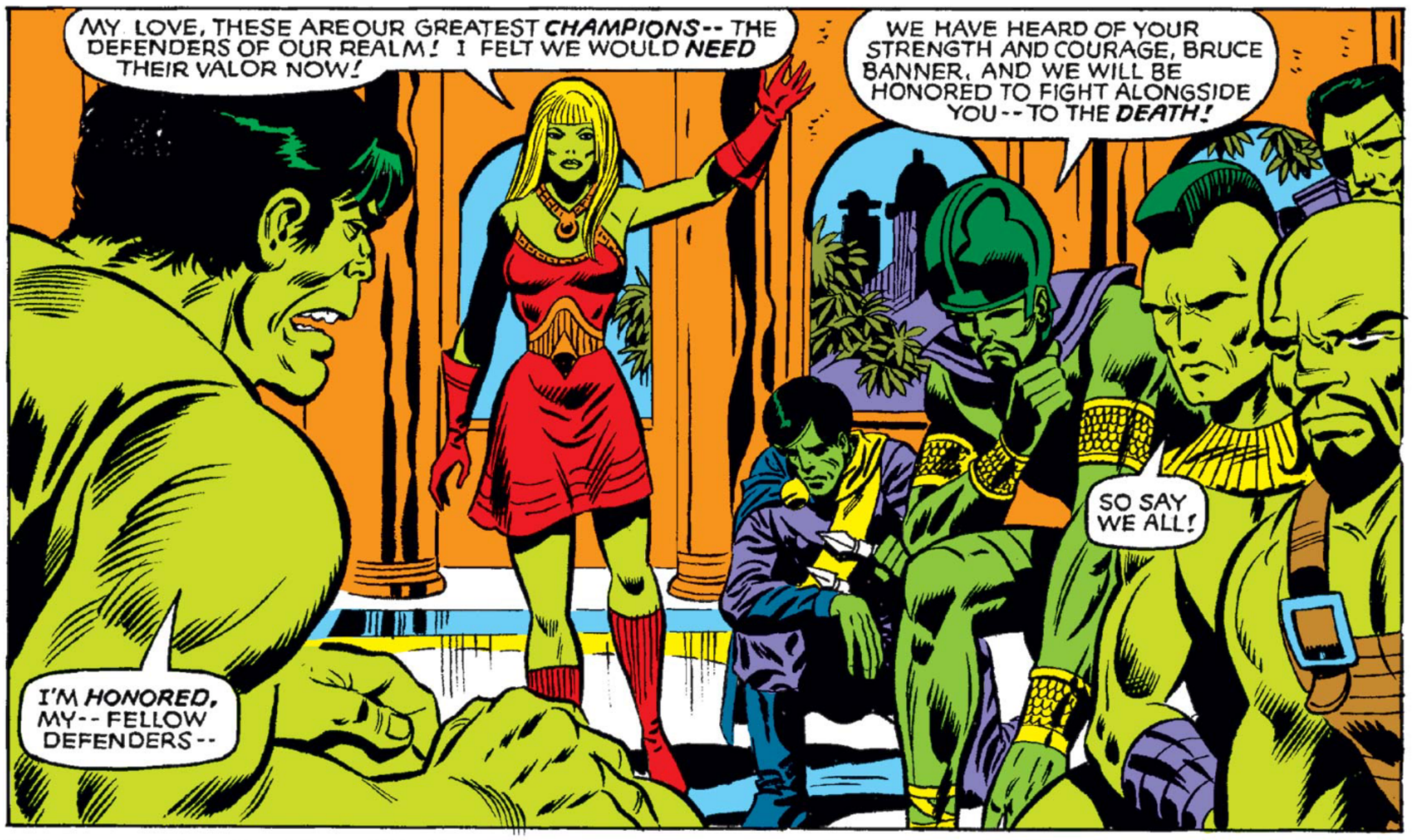

"-- OF STRANGE FUNGOID GROWTHS THAT SUDDENLY COVER BUILDINGS --


"-- AND MYSTERIOUS MACHINES RAVAGING THE COUNTRYSIDE!"

BUT, BLAST IT, WE CAN'T LAY OUR HANDS ON WHAT'S CAUSING IT! WHY DO WE HAVE AN ENEMY WE CAN'T SMASH ?!?

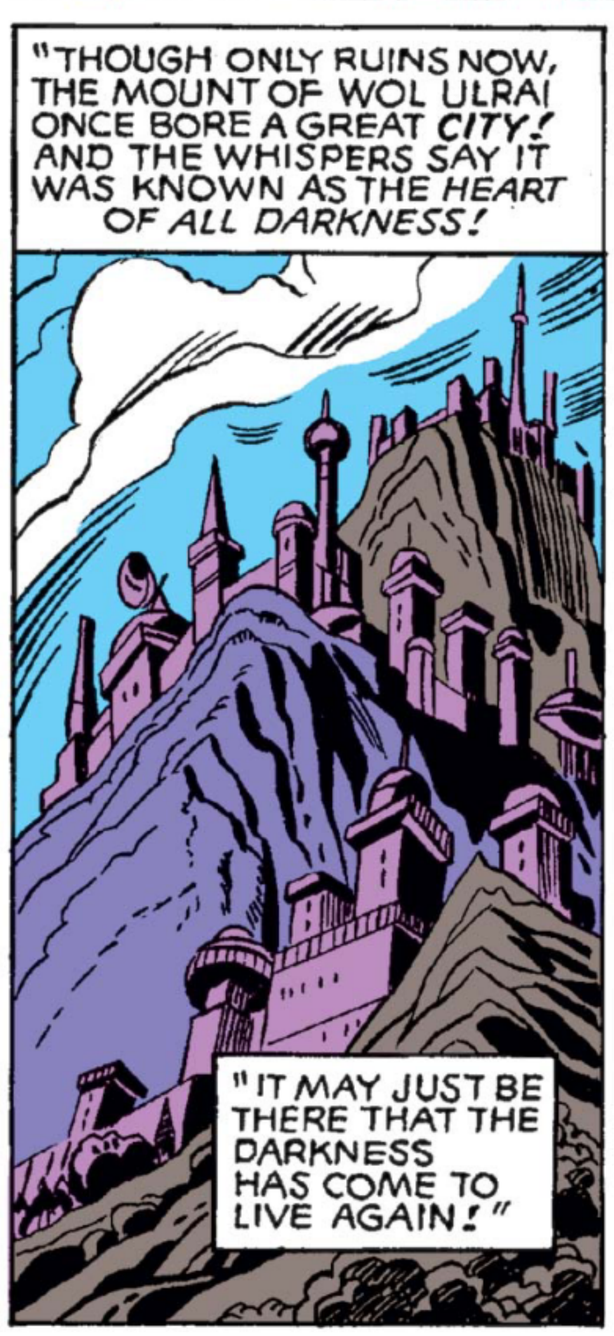
YOUR PARDON, MY QUEEN, BUT THEY HAVE ARRIVED!
THEN MY PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED! SHOW THEM IN!


I HAD NOT DARED TO HOPE THAT YOU WOULD HEAR OUR CALL IN THIS DARK HOUR, YET HERE YOU ARE-- ALL OF YOU!
CNERLA OF THE KNIVES--
--GREAT HROND--
--YTHAER THE SWIFT--
--FIERCE VIDIAS--
--AND GLUNNO THE WINGED ONE!
WE COULD DO NAUGHT ELSE BUT COME, MY QUEEN!

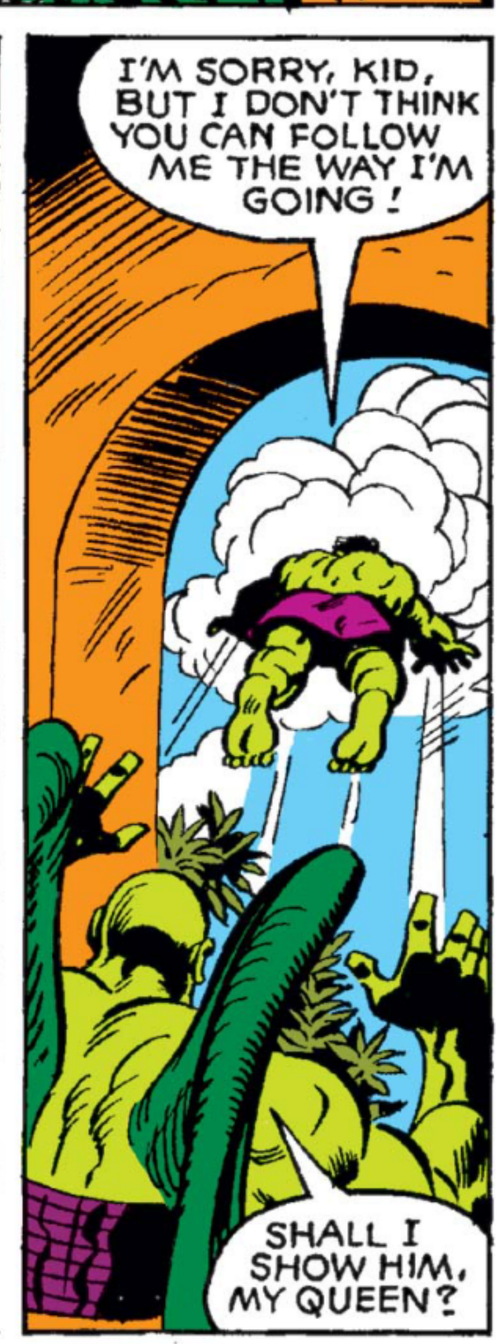

MY LOVE, THESE ARE OUR GREATEST CHAMPIONS-- THE DEFENDERS OF OUR REALM! I FELT WE WOULD NEED THEIR VALOR NOW!
WE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR STRENGTH AND COURAGE, BRUCE BANNER, AND WE WILL BE HONORED TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE YOU -- TO THE DEATH!
I'M HONORED, MY-- FELLOW DEFENDERS--
SO SAY WE ALL!

--BUT WE STILL DON'T HAVE A SOLID ENEMY! WHAT WE COULD USE WOULD BE THE OFFICES OF MY GOOD FRIEND STEPHEN STRANGE!
BRUCE--ALL OF US HAD THOUGHT THE WORSHIP OF THE DARK GODS ON K'AI ENDED GEOLOGIC AGES AGO, AND ALMOST NO RECORDS SURVIVE FROM THAT FOUL TIME! HOWEVER--

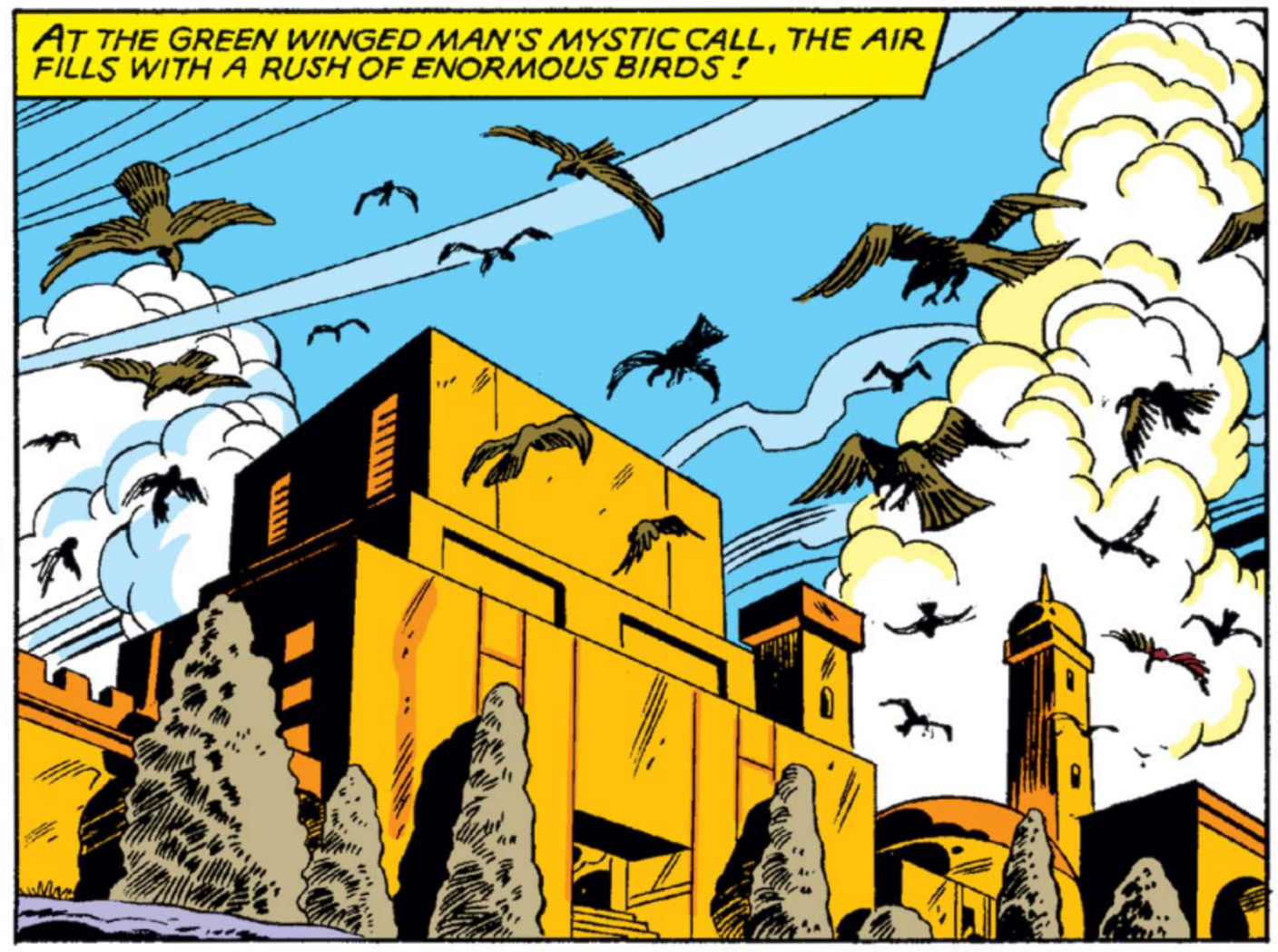
--THERE ARE WHISPERS, LEGENDS ONLY A FEW MEN HAVE HEARD OF-- OF THE PLACE CALLED WOL ULRAI!

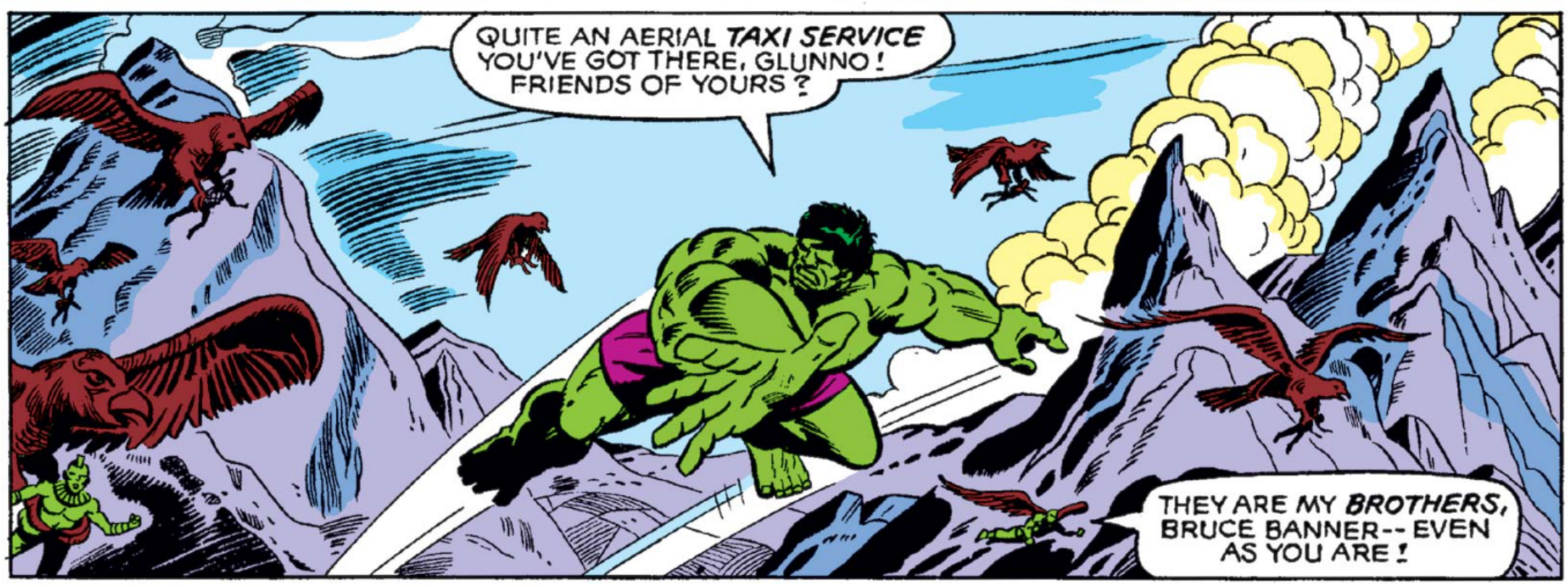

"THOUGH ONLY RUINS NOW, THE MOUNT OF WOL ULRAI ONCE BORE A GREAT CITY! AND THE WHISPERS SAY IT WAS KNOWN AS THE HEART OF ALL DARKNESS!
"IT MAY JUST BE THERE THAT THE DARKNESS HAS COME TO LIVE AGAIN!"

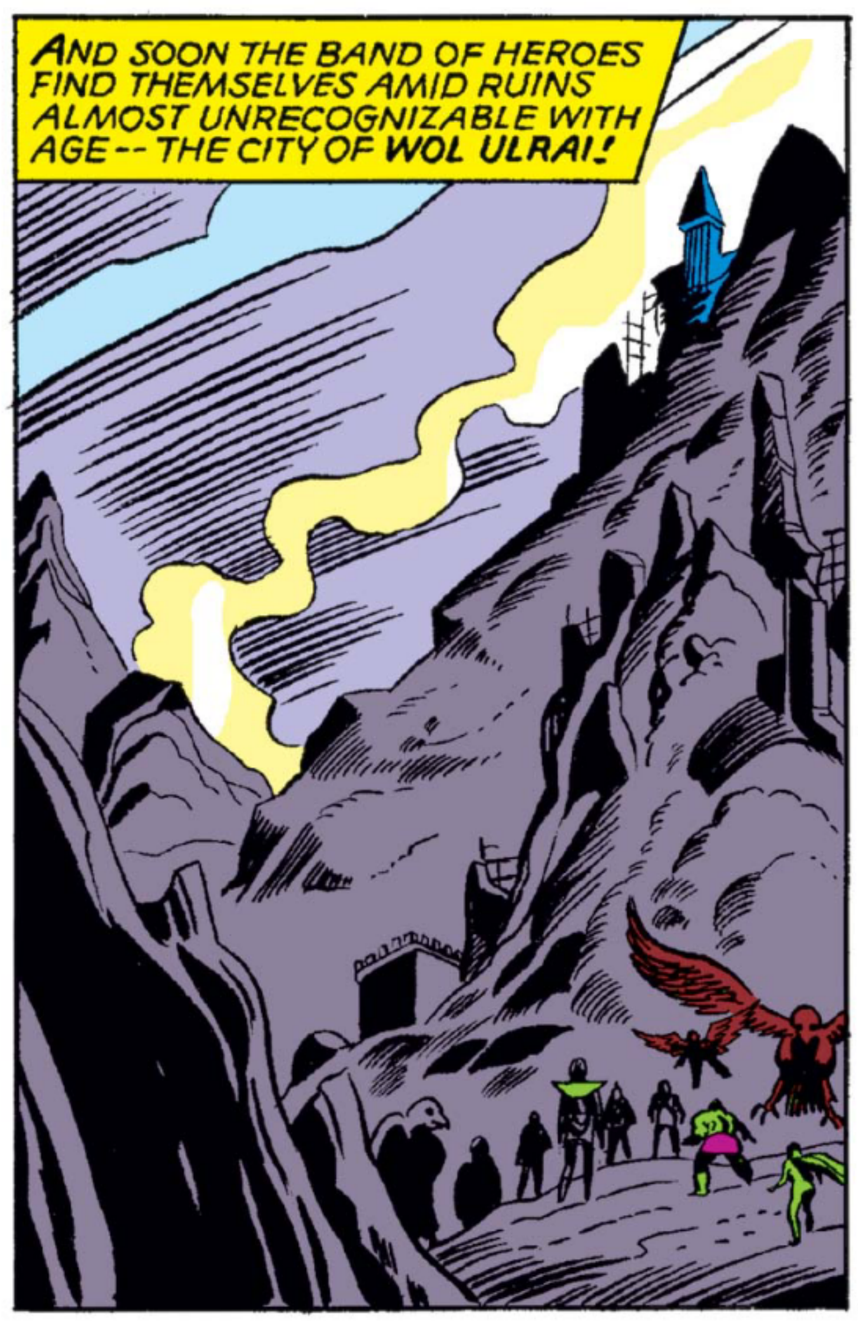
GREAT! THEN WOL ULRAI IT IS! AND SINCE THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT--!
BRUCE, WAIT! DON'T GO OFF ALONE!


I'M SORRY, KID, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU CAN FOLLOW ME THE WAY I'M GOING!
SHALL I SHOW HIM, MY QUEEN?

TO ME, MY BROTHERS OF THE WING AND CLAW! BEAR US UP, LEND US THE WIND!


AT THE GREEN WINGED MAN'S MYSTIC CALL, THE AIR FILLS WITH A RUSH OF ENORMOUS BIRDS!

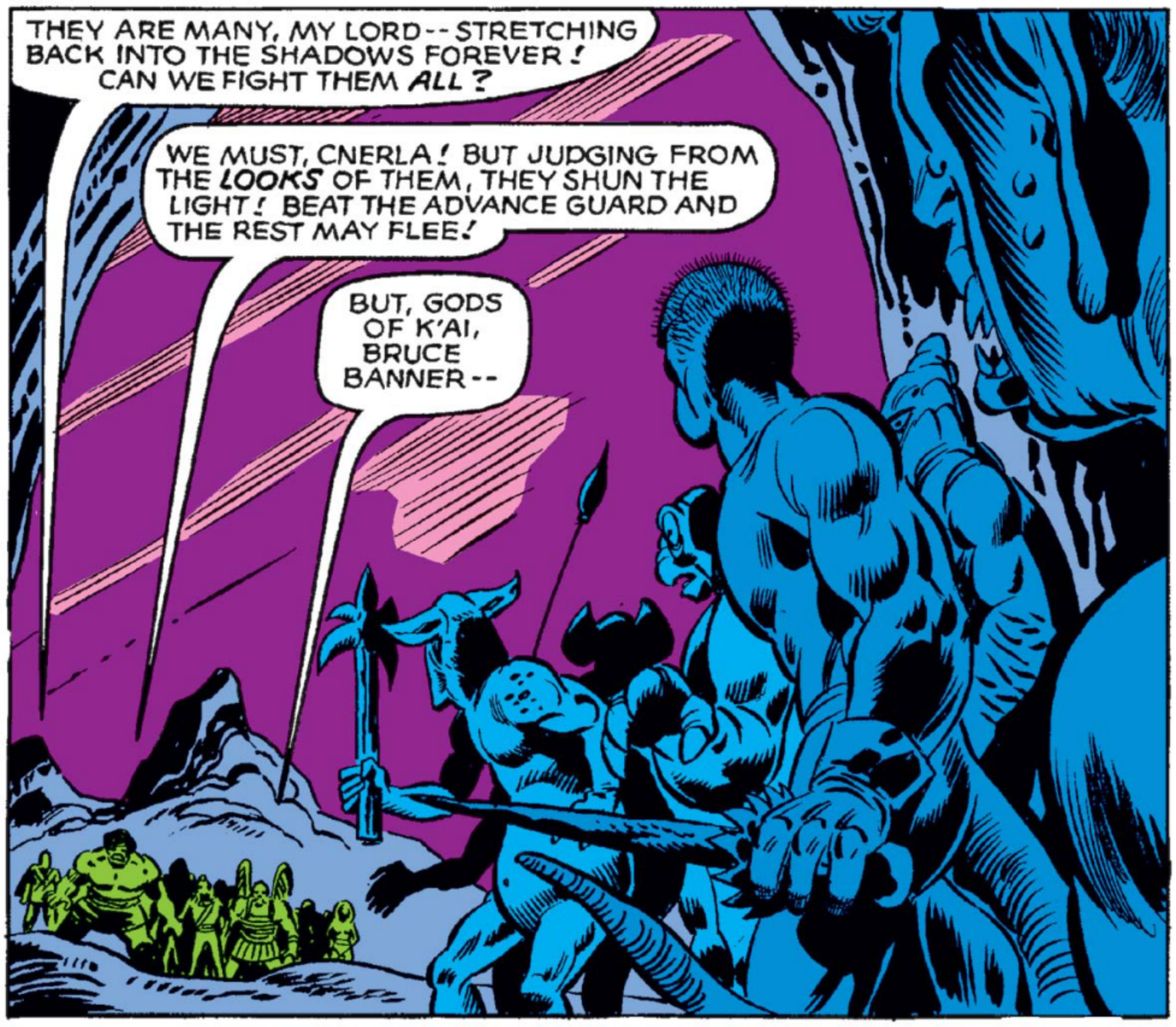

QUITE AN AERIAL TAXI SERVICE YOU'VE GOT THERE, GLUNNO! FRIENDS OF YOURS?
THEY ARE MY BROTHERS, BRUCE BANNER-- EVEN AS YOU ARE!


AND SOON THE BAND OF HEROES FIND THEMSELVES AMID RUINS ALMOST UNRECOGNIZABLE WITH AGE-- THE CITY OF WOL ULRAI!

GLUNNO-- THE BIRDS! THEY TAKE OFF AS IN FEAR! WHAT COULD FRIGHTEN SUCH AS THEY?

THEY FEAR LITTLE, VIDIAS-- BUT THERE ARE SOME ABOMINATIONS NO NATURAL CREATURE CAN STOMACH! BEHOLD!

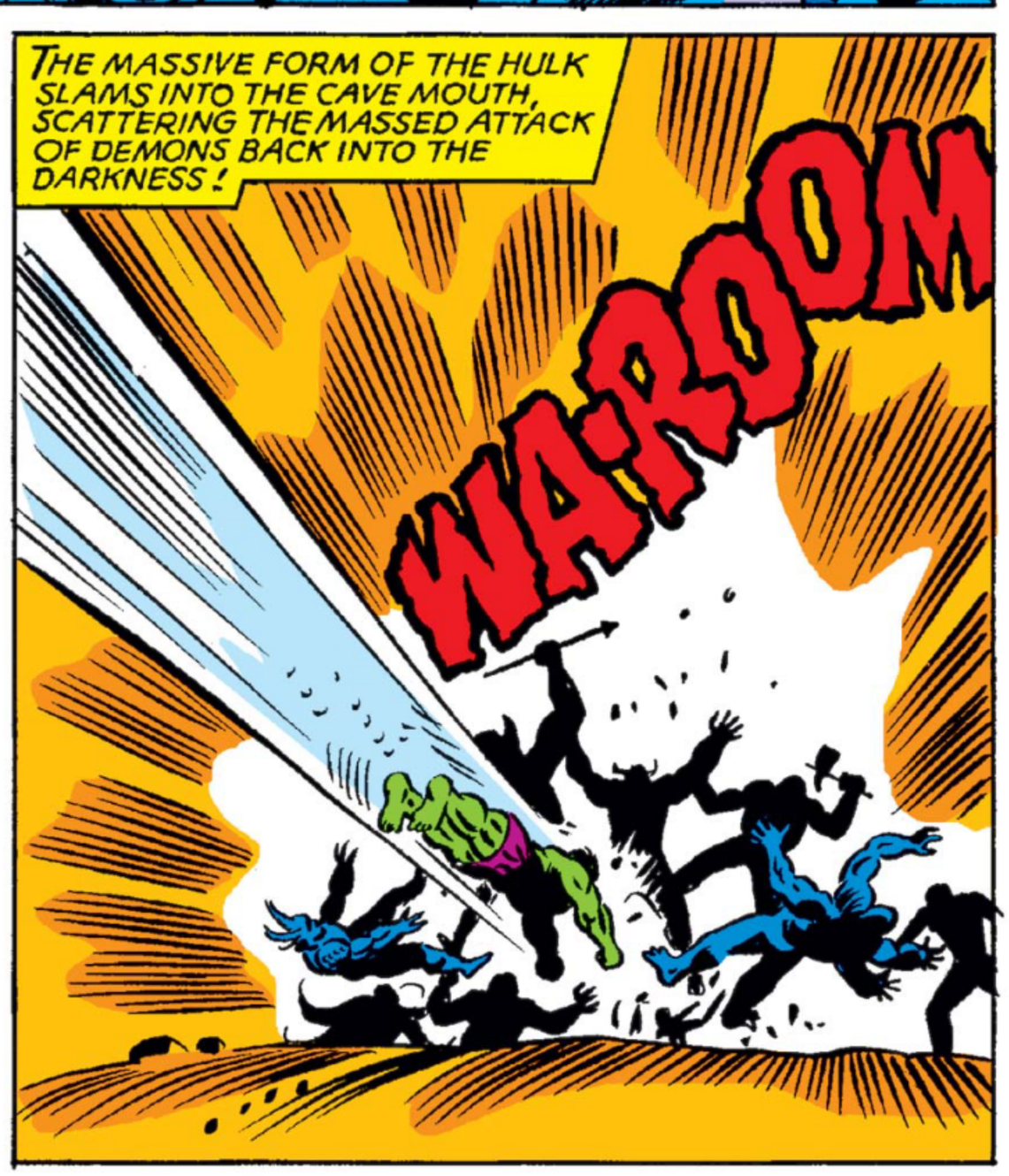
FROM OUT OF THE STINKING PITS THEY COME -- THE SPAWN OF THE *DARK GODS!*

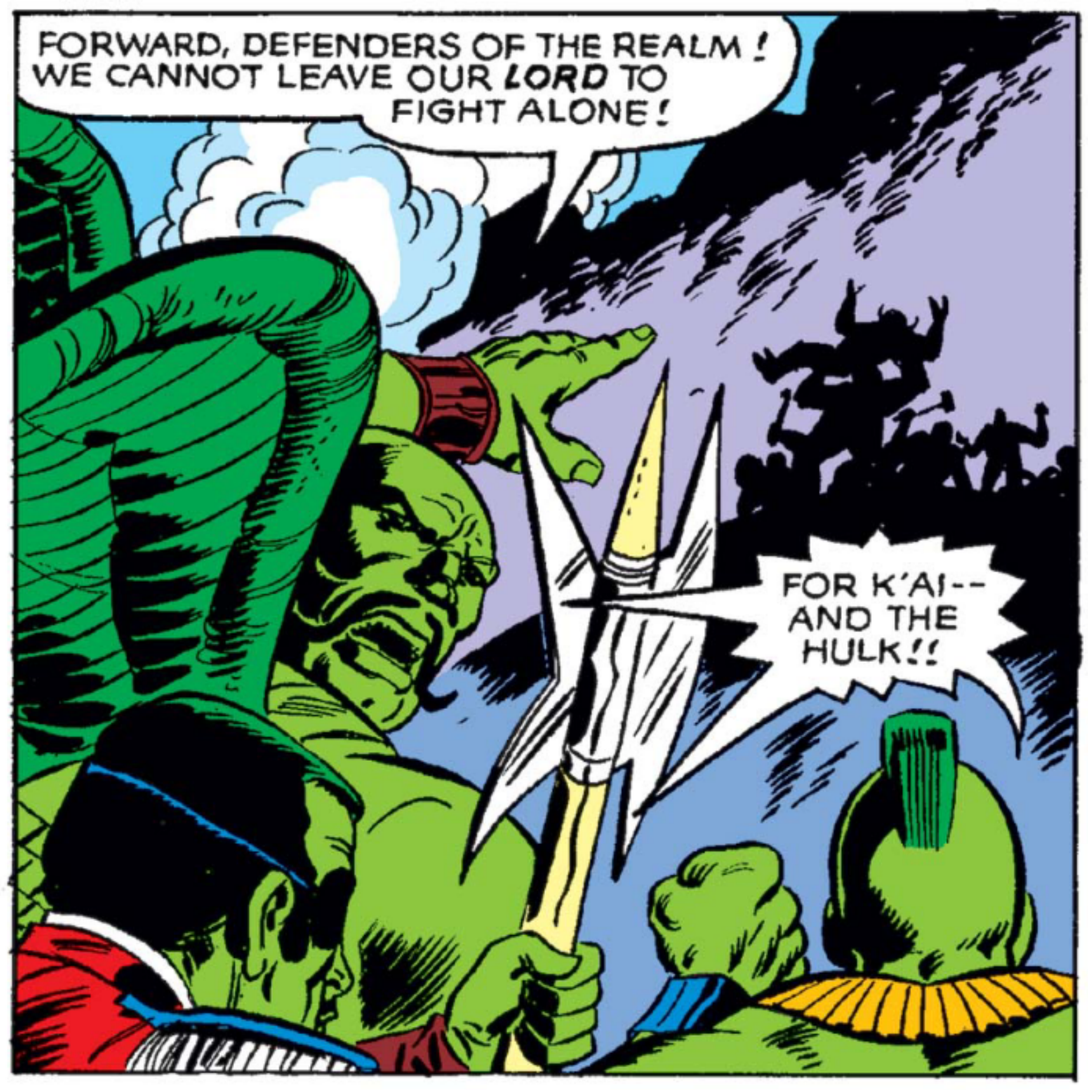

THEY ARE MANY, MY LORD -- STRETCHING BACK INTO THE SHADOWS FOREVER! CAN WE FIGHT THEM *ALL*?
WE MUST, CNERLA! BUT JUDGING FROM THE *LOOKS* OF THEM, THEY SHUN THE LIGHT! BEAT THE ADVANCE GUARD AND THE REST MAY FLEE!
BUT, GODS OF K'AI, BRUCE BANNER --

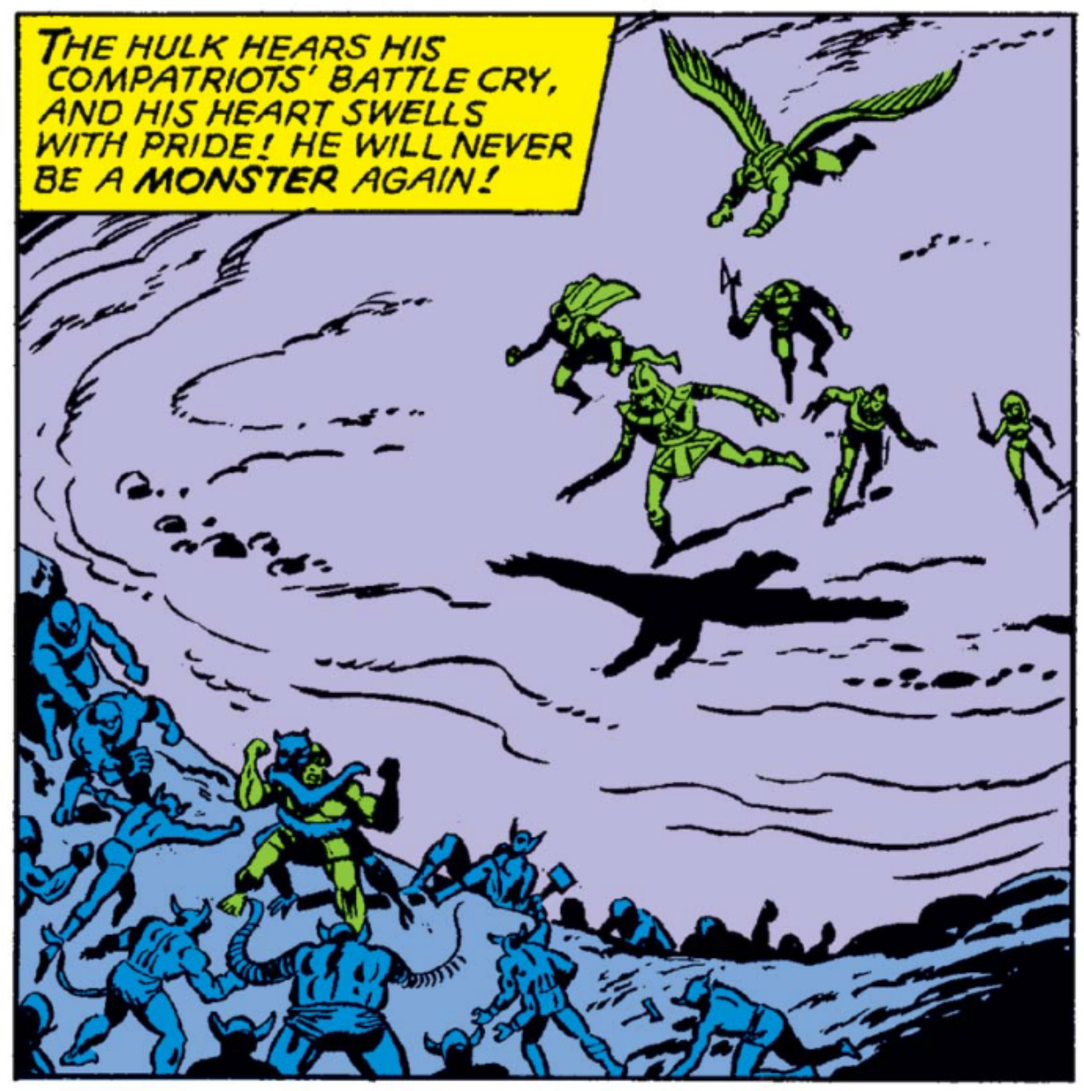
"WHAT NIGHTMARES THESE CREATURES ARE!
"WERE THESE ONCE *MEN* -- OR WERE MEN ONCE SUCH AS THESE??"

IT DOESN'T MATTER, HROND! *I* WAS ONCE A MAN -- AND NOW I'M MORE! THAT DOESN'T CHANGE GOOD -- OR EVIL --

-- OR THE NEED TO FIGHT! *FOR K'AI!!*


THE MASSIVE FORM OF THE HULK SLAMS INTO THE CAVE MOUTH, SCATTERING THE MASSED ATTACK OF DEMONS BACK INTO THE DARKNESS!
WA-ROOM



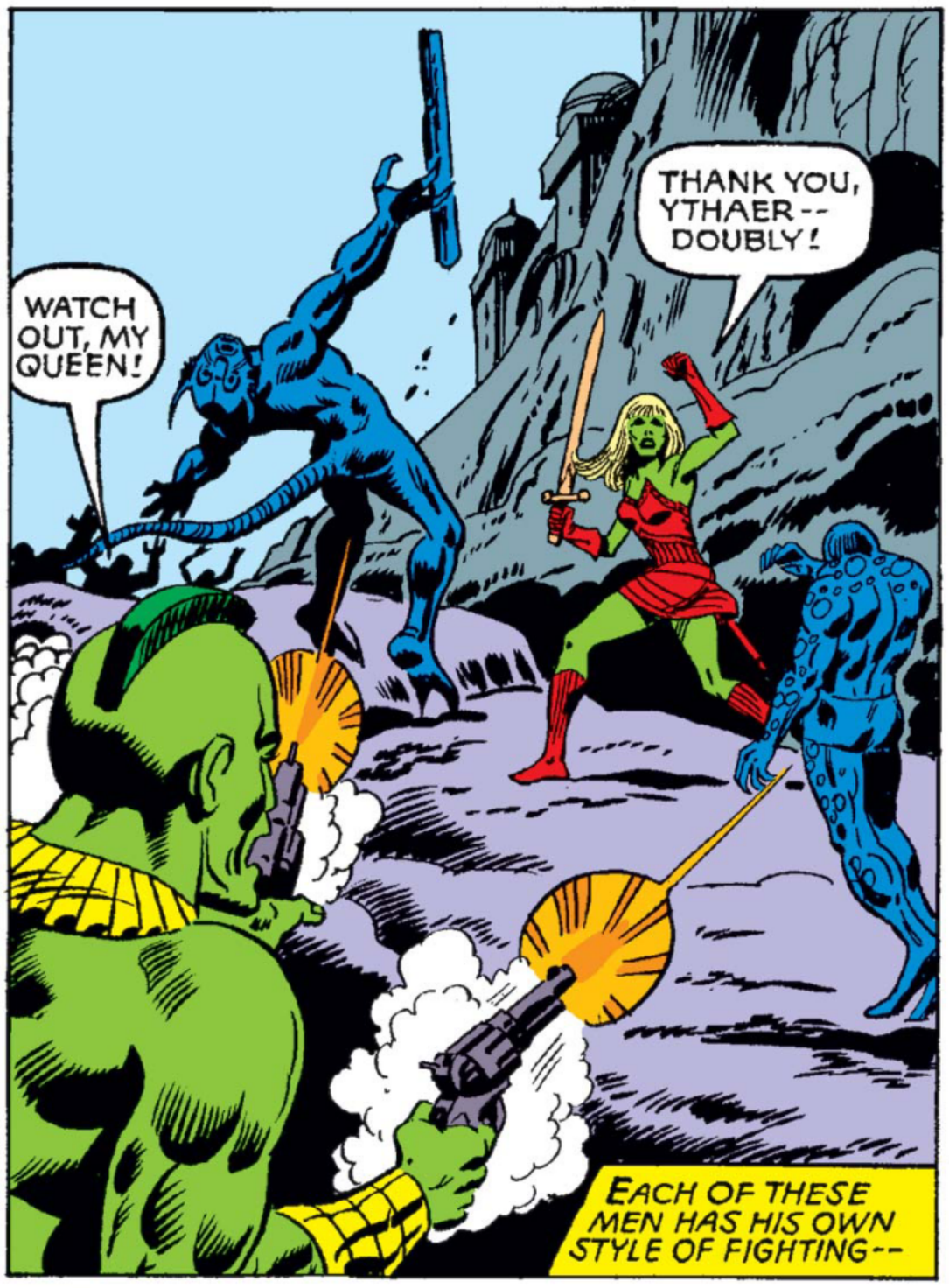


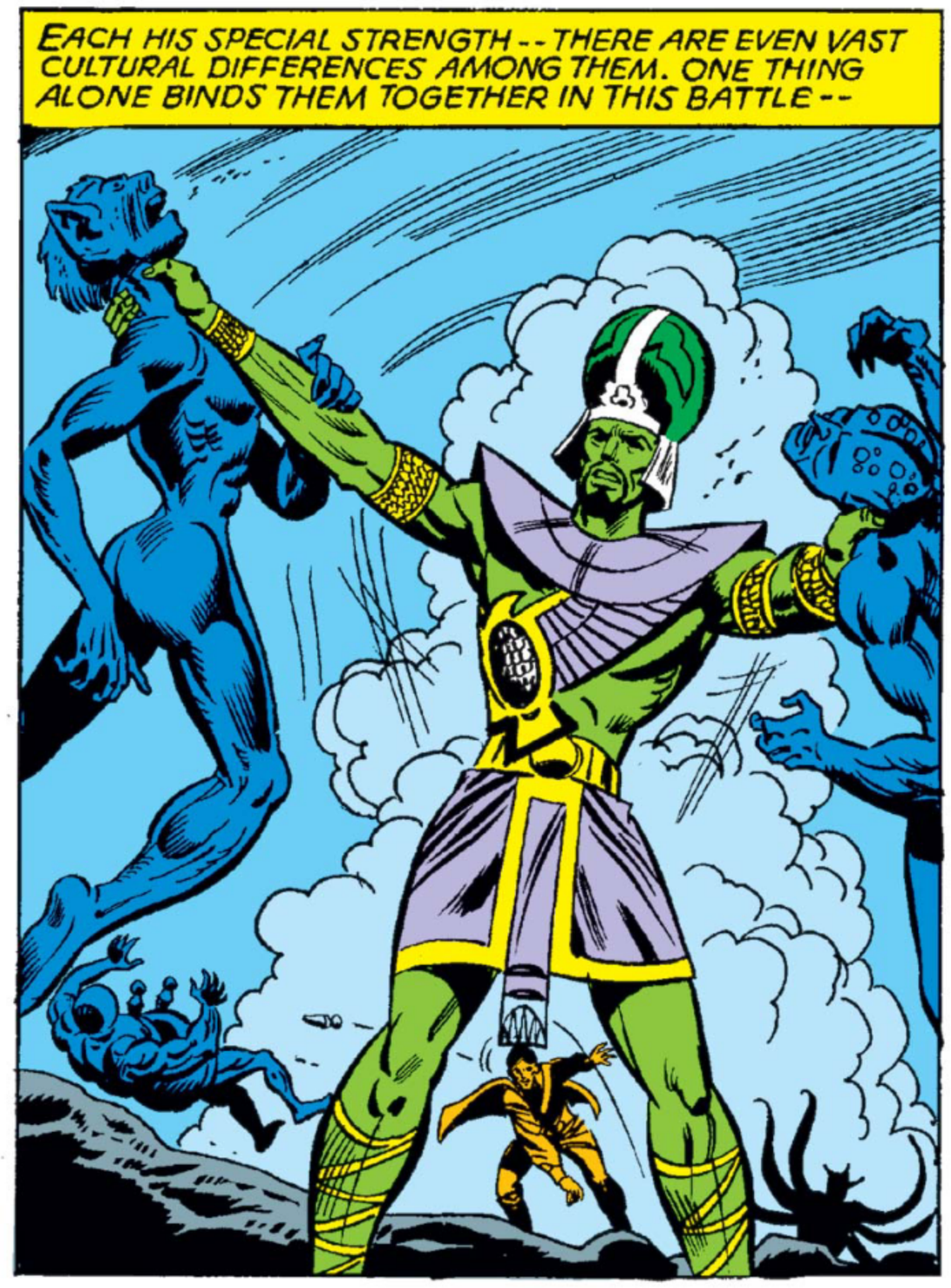
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE IS WITNESS TO THE AWESOME PROWESS OF THE HEROES-- THE SUPER HEROES-- OF K'AI!

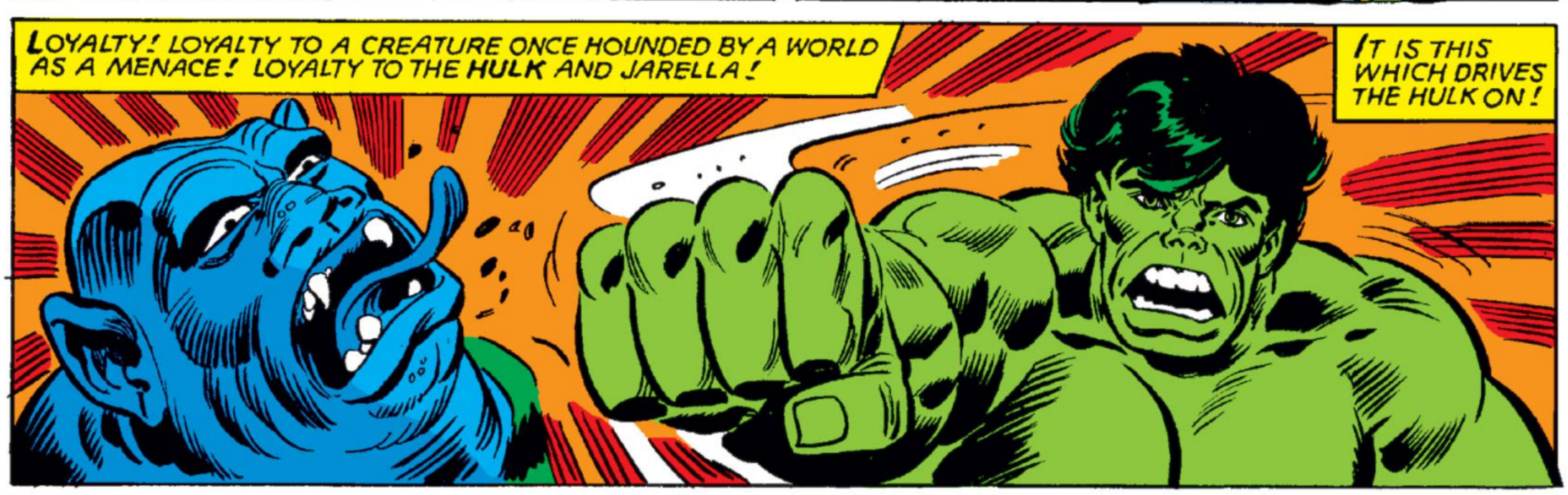
WE ARE SCATTERING THEM, MY LORD HULK!

YES, BUT THEY'RE TOUGHER THAN THEY LOOK!

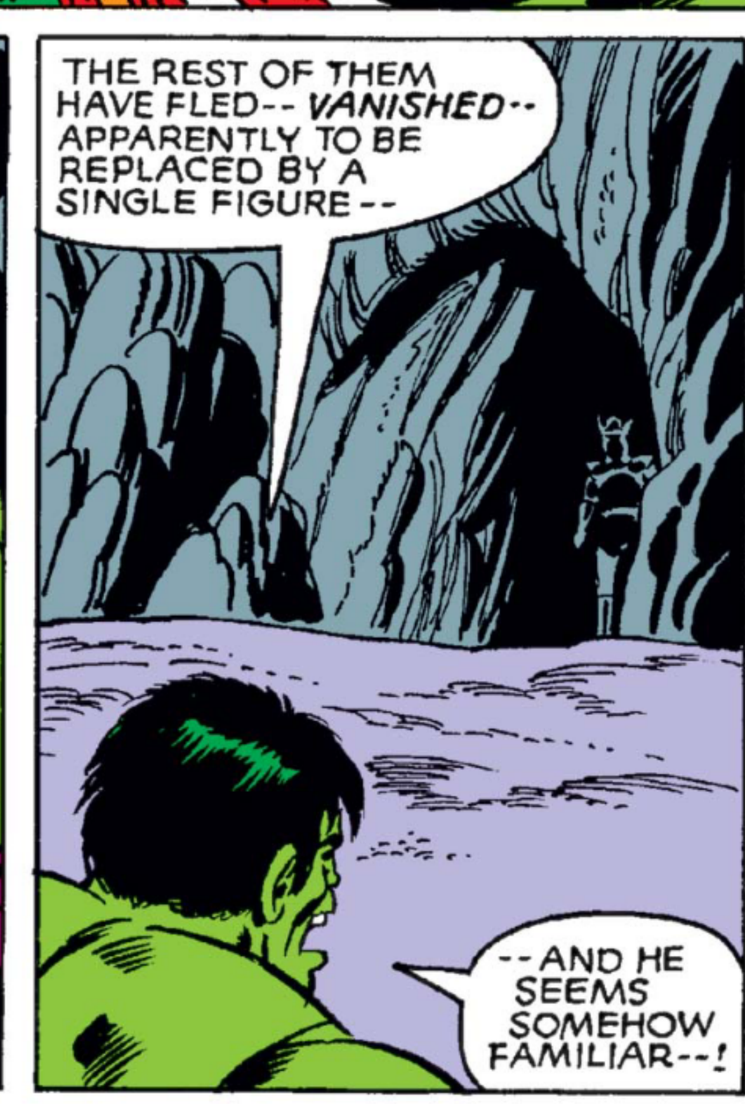
BUT IF THEY WERE NOT TOUGH, MY LORD, WHAT FUN WOULD THEY BE TO FIGHT?

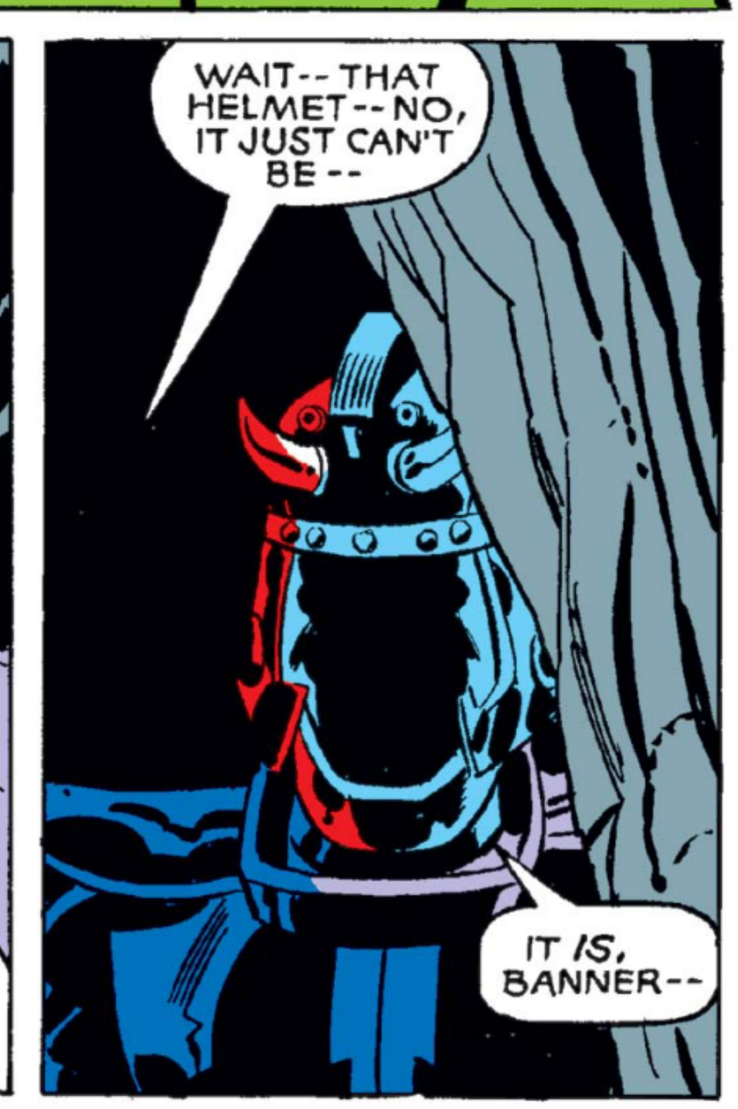

WATCH OUT, MY QUEEN!
THANK YOU, YTHAER -- DOUBLY!
EACH OF THESE MEN HAS HIS OWN STYLE OF FIGHTING--


EACH HIS SPECIAL STRENGTH -- THERE ARE EVEN VAST CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AMONG THEM. ONE THING ALONE BINDS THEM TOGETHER IN THIS BATTLE --


LOYALTY! LOYALTY TO A CREATURE ONCE HOUNDED BY A WORLD AS A MENACE! LOYALTY TO THE HULK AND JARELLA!
IT IS THIS WHICH DRIVES THE HULK ON!

THEY'VE STOPPED COMING! HAVE WE BEATEN THEM ALL, OR --?

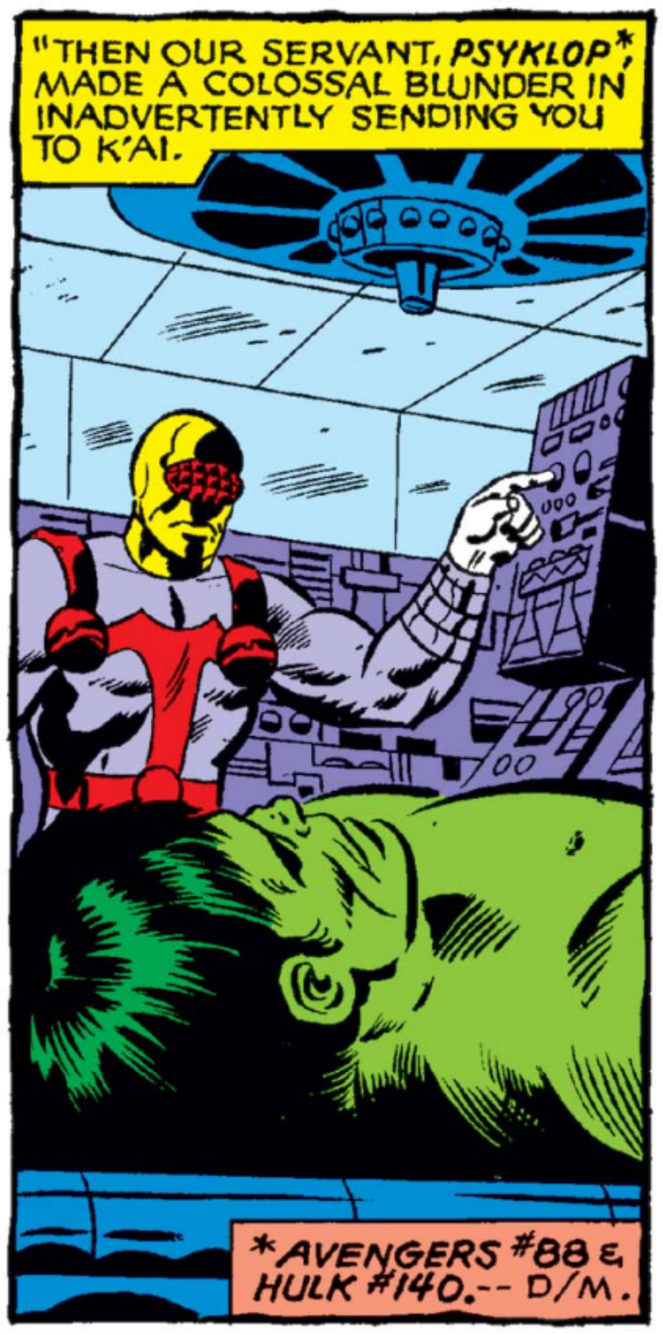

THE REST OF THEM HAVE FLED-- VANISHED-- APPARENTLY TO BE REPLACED BY A SINGLE FIGURE --
--AND HE SEEMS SOMEHOW FAMILIAR--!

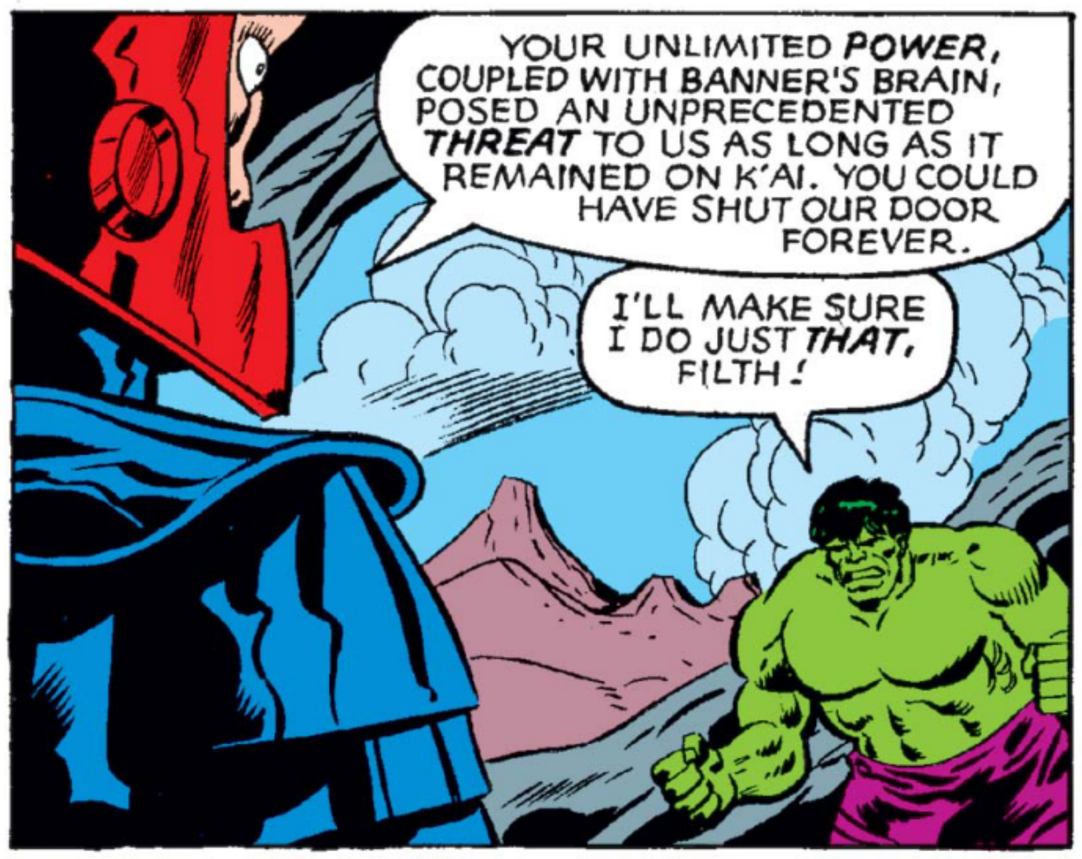

WAIT-- THAT HELMET-- NO, IT JUST CAN'T BE --
IT IS, BANNER--

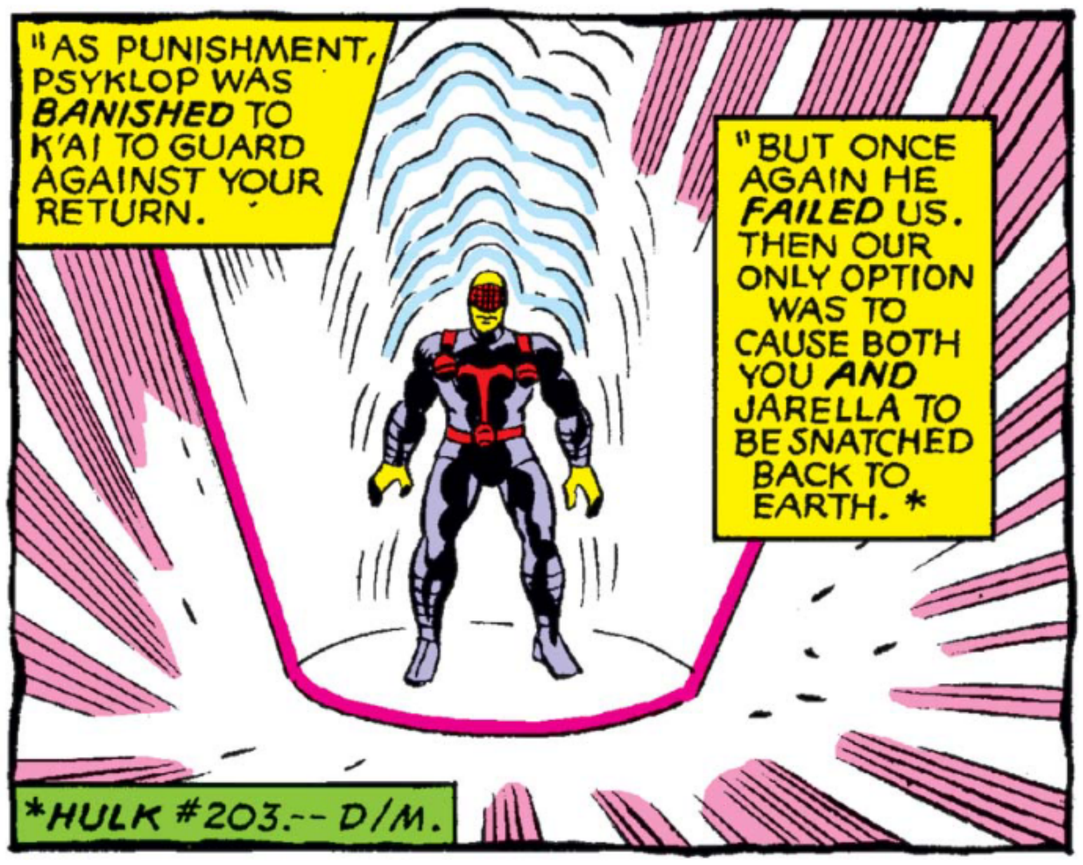
--AND YET, IT IS NOT.
LORD VISIS!* TRAITOR TO JARELLA'S COURT! BUT-- GOOD LORD, MAN--
VISIS? YES, I WAS VISIS ONCE.
*LAST SEEN IN HULK#155.-- D/M.

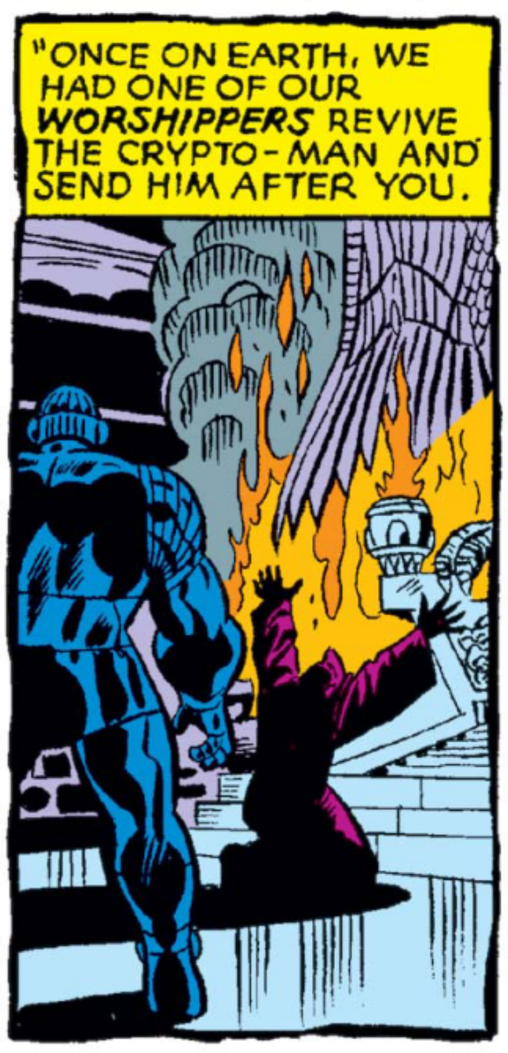
--BUT NOW I HAVE BECOME SOMETHING ELSE: THE VOICE OF THE DARK GODS.
LISTEN TO YOUR DOOM, BRUCE BANNER

"KNOW YOU, THAT IN THE CONTINUUM, K'AI LIES DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE DARK GODS' COSMOS--
"--AND HAS EVER SERVED AS A GATEWAY FOR US TO WORLDS WITHOUT NUMBER.


"THEN OUR SERVANT, PSYKLOP*, MADE A COLOSSAL BLUNDER IN INADVERTENTLY SENDING YOU TO K'AI.
*AVENGERS #88 & HULK #140.-- D/M.

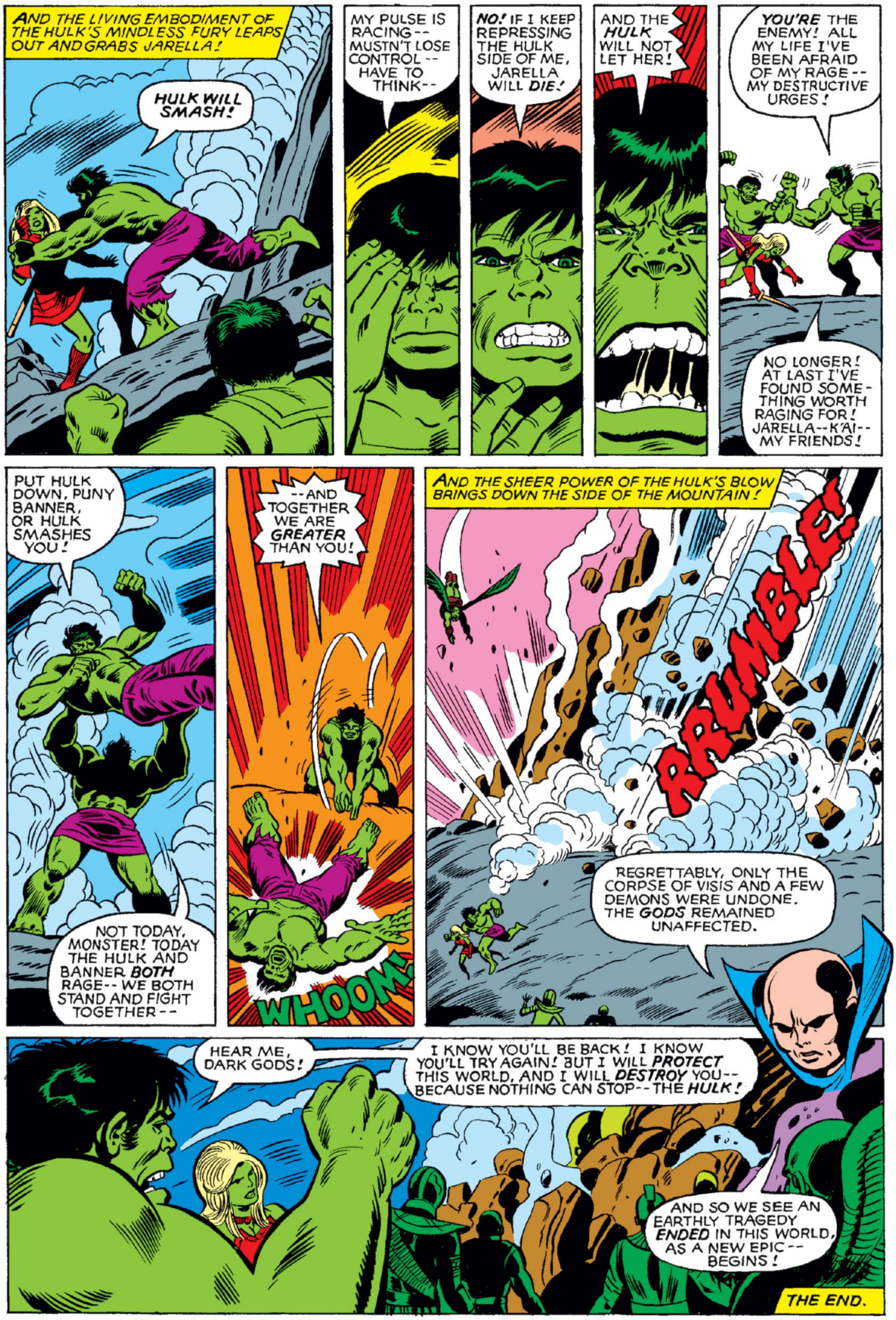

YOUR UNLIMITED POWER, COUPLED WITH BANNER'S BRAIN, POSED AN UNPRECEDENTED THREAT TO US AS LONG AS IT REMAINED ON K'AI. YOU COULD HAVE SHUT OUR DOOR FOREVER.
I'LL MAKE SURE I DO JUST THAT, FILTH!


"AS PUNISHMENT, PSYKLOP WAS BANISHED TO K'AI TO GUARD AGAINST YOUR RETURN.
"BUT ONCE AGAIN HE FAILED US. THEN OUR ONLY OPTION WAS TO CAUSE BOTH YOU AND JARELLA TO BE SNATCHED BACK TO EARTH.*
*HULK #203.-- D/M.

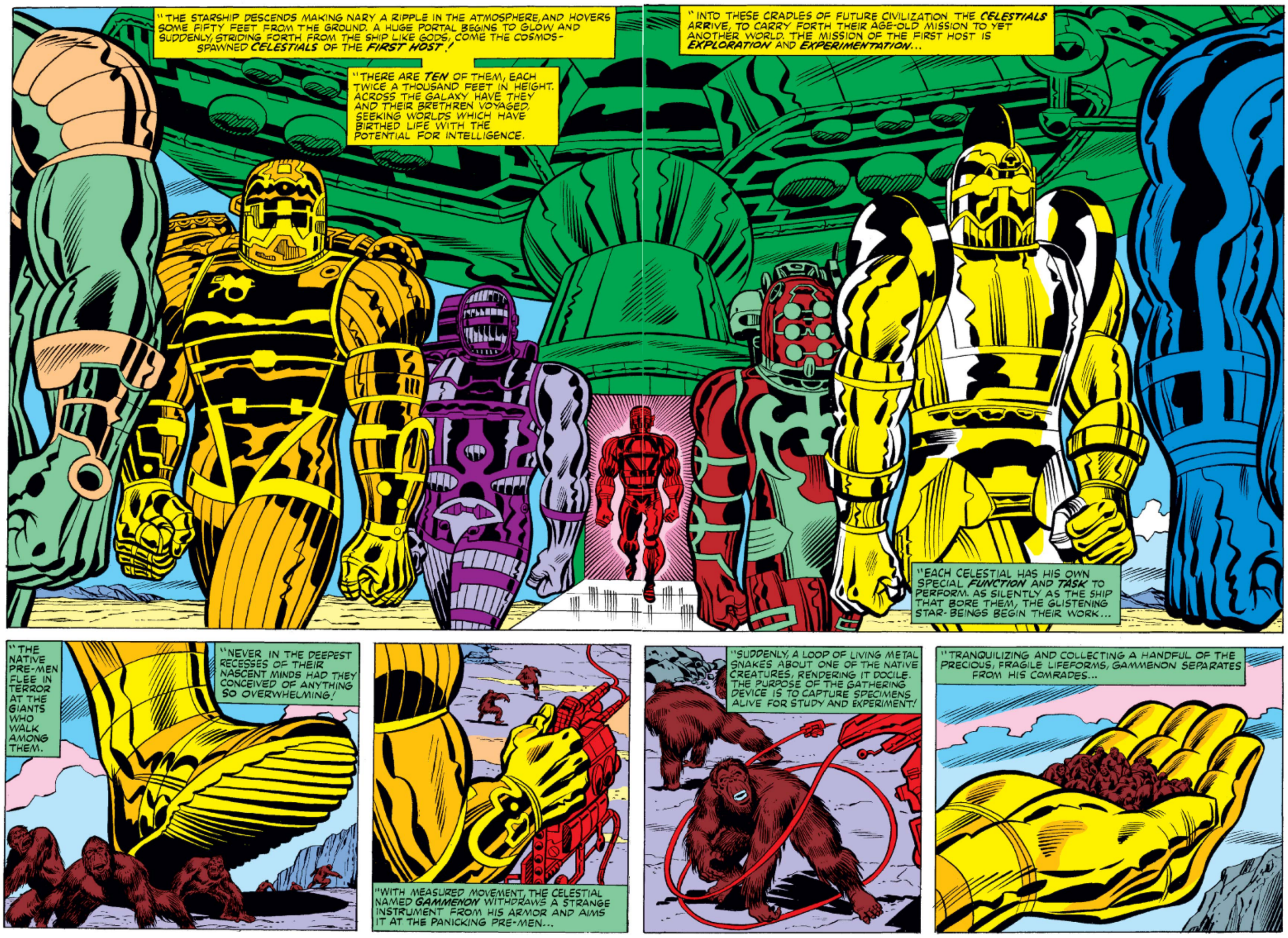

"ONCE ON EARTH, WE HAD ONE OF OUR WORSHIPPERS REVIVE THE CRYPTO-MAN AND SEND HIM AFTER YOU.

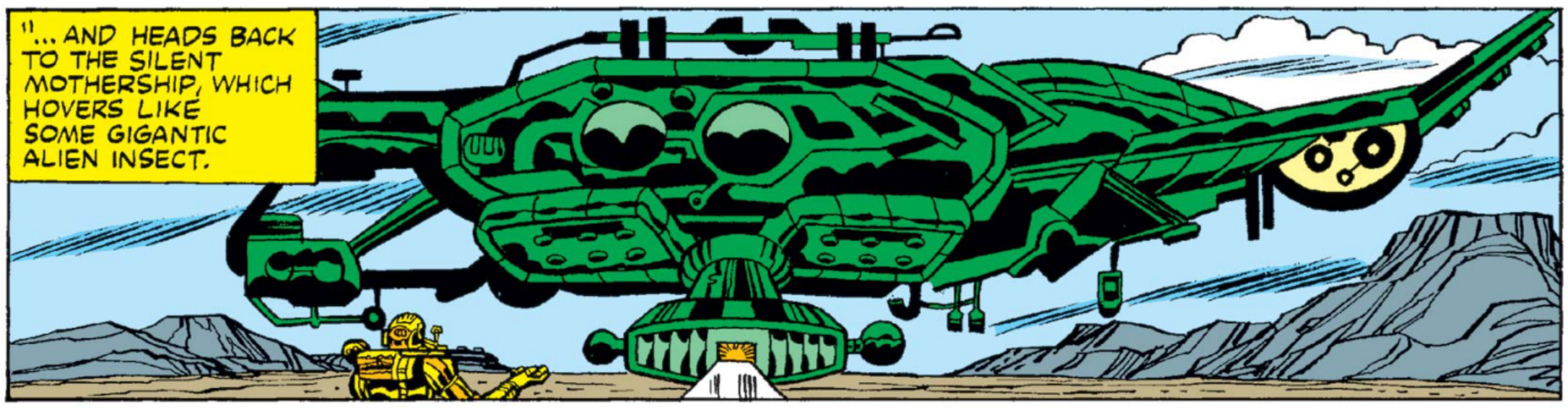
"DURING THE BATTLE WE CREATED THE ILLUSION OF A BOY THAT WOULD HAVE CAUSED JARELLA TO SACRIFICE HERSELF.
"WITH JARELLA DEAD, YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE RETURNED TO K'AI.

SOMEHOW WE WERE THWARTED. THOUGH IT IS NOT OUR WAY, WE MUST NOW CRUSH YOU DIRECTLY. BEHOLD THE WEAPON WHICH UNDID YOU ONCE BEFORE*: YOUR OWN MAD, RAGING, BESTIAL SELF-- THE ONE THING YOU ARE AFRAID TO FIGHT-- CREATED BY A MACHINE OF A TIME-LOST AGE.
*IN HULK #156.-- D/M.


AND THE LIVING EMBODIMENT OF THE HULK'S MINDLESS FURY LEAPS OUT AND GRABS JARELLA!
HULK WILL SMASH!
MY PULSE IS RACING -- MUSTN'T LOSE CONTROL -- HAVE TO THINK--
NO! IF I KEEP REPRESSING THE HULK SIDE OF ME, JARELLA WILL DIE!
AND THE HULK WILL NOT LET HER!
YOU'RE THE ENEMY! ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN AFRAID OF MY RAGE -- MY DESTRUCTIVE URGES!
NO LONGER! AT LAST I'VE FOUND SOMETHING WORTH RAGING FOR! JARELLA--K'AI-- MY FRIENDS!
PUT HULK DOWN, PUNY BANNER, OR HULK SMASHES YOU!
NOT TODAY, MONSTER! TODAY THE HULK AND BANNER BOTH RAGE-- WE BOTH STAND AND FIGHT TOGETHER--
--AND TOGETHER WE ARE GREATER THAN YOU!
WHOOM!
AND THE SHEER POWER OF THE HULK'S BLOW BRINGS DOWN THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!
RRUMBLE!
REGRETTABLY, ONLY THE CORPSE OF VISIS AND A FEW DEMONS WERE UNDONE. THE GODS REMAINED UNAFFECTED.
HEAR ME, DARK GODS!
I KNOW YOU'LL BE BACK! I KNOW YOU'LL TRY AGAIN! BUT I WILL PROTECT THIS WORLD, AND I WILL DESTROY YOU-- BECAUSE NOTHING CAN STOP--THE HULK!
AND SO WE SEE AN EARTHLY TRAGEDY ENDED IN THIS WORLD, AS A NEW EPIC-- BEGINS!
THE END.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: UNTOLD TALES OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE!
I AM THE WATCHER. IN TIMES PAST I HAVE SHARED WITH YOU GLIMPSES OF WORLDS THAT DIVERGE FROM THE ONE YOU KNOW BEST. OBSERVING THESE ALTERNATE REALITIES HAS OFT PROVIDED INSIGHTS INTO THE REALITY OF MY UNIVERSE.
OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO ME IS THE PLANET I HAVE OBSERVED SINCE ITS INFANCY... THE EARTH WITHIN THE UNIVERSE THAT SPAWNED ME. IT IS A WORLD FILLED WITH WONDERS AND MYSTERIES UNIQUE IN ALL CREATION. THIS IS ONE OF THEM...
THE FIRST CELESTIAL HOST!
"IT BEGINS ONE MORNING EONS AGO IN A FERTILE VALLEY SOMEWHERE ON EARTH'S LARGEST CONTINENT.
"IT BEGINS WITH A TRIBE OF LARGE-BRAINED BIPEDS WHO WOULD ONE DAY BE CALLED MEN-- LONG BEFORE THEY INVENTED LANGUAGE, OR TOOLS, OR GODS.
"IT BEGINS WITH THE LANDING OF A CRAFT FROM BEYOND THE STARS-- A VESSEL SO ENORMOUS THAT TO THESE AWE-STRUCK ANTHROPOIDS IT SEEMS TO ENGULF THE SUN!
THE PULSE-POUNDING PREMIERE OF A SIGNIFICANT NEW SERIES BY...
MARK GRUENWALD WORDS • RON WILSON & CHIC STONE PICTURES • MICHAEL HIGGINS LETTERS • GAFF COLORS


"THE STARSHIP DESCENDS MAKING NARY A RIPPLE IN THE ATMOSPHERE, AND HOVERS SOME FIFTY FEET FROM THE GROUND. A HUGE PORTAL BEGINS TO GLOW AND SUDDENLY, STRIDING FORTH FROM THE SHIP LIKE GODS, COME THE COSMOS-SPAWNED CELESTIALS OF THE FIRST HOST!
"THERE ARE TEN OF THEM, EACH TWICE A THOUSAND FEET IN HEIGHT. ACROSS THE GALAXY HAVE THEY AND THEIR BRETHREN VOYAGED, SEEKING WORLDS WHICH HAVE BIRTHED LIFE WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR INTELLIGENCE.
"INTO THESE CRADLES OF FUTURE CIVILIZATION THE CELESTIALS ARRIVE, TO CARRY FORTH THEIR AGE-OLD MISSION TO YET ANOTHER WORLD. THE MISSION OF THE FIRST HOST IS EXPLORATION AND EXPERIMENTATION...
"EACH CELESTIAL HAS HIS OWN SPECIAL FUNCTION AND TASK TO PERFORM. AS SILENTLY AS THE SHIP THAT BORE THEM, THE GLISTENING STAR-BEINGS BEGIN THEIR WORK...
"THE NATIVE PRE-MEN FLEE IN TERROR AT THE GIANTS WHO WALK AMONG THEM.
"NEVER IN THE DEEPEST RECESSES OF THEIR NASCENT MINDS HAD THEY CONCEIVED OF ANYTHING SO OVERWHELMING!
"WITH MEASURED MOVEMENT, THE CELESTIAL NAMED GAMMENON WITHDRAWS A STRANGE INSTRUMENT FROM HIS ARMOR AND AIMS IT AT THE PANICKING PRE-MEN...
"SUDDENLY, A LOOP OF LIVING METAL SNAKES ABOUT ONE OF THE NATIVE CREATURES, RENDERING IT DOCILE. THE PURPOSE OF THE GATHERING DEVICE IS TO CAPTURE SPECIMENS ALIVE FOR STUDY AND EXPERIMENT!
"TRANQUILIZING AND COLLECTING A HANDFUL OF THE PRECIOUS, FRAGILE LIFEFORMS, GAMMENON SEPARATES FROM HIS COMRADES...

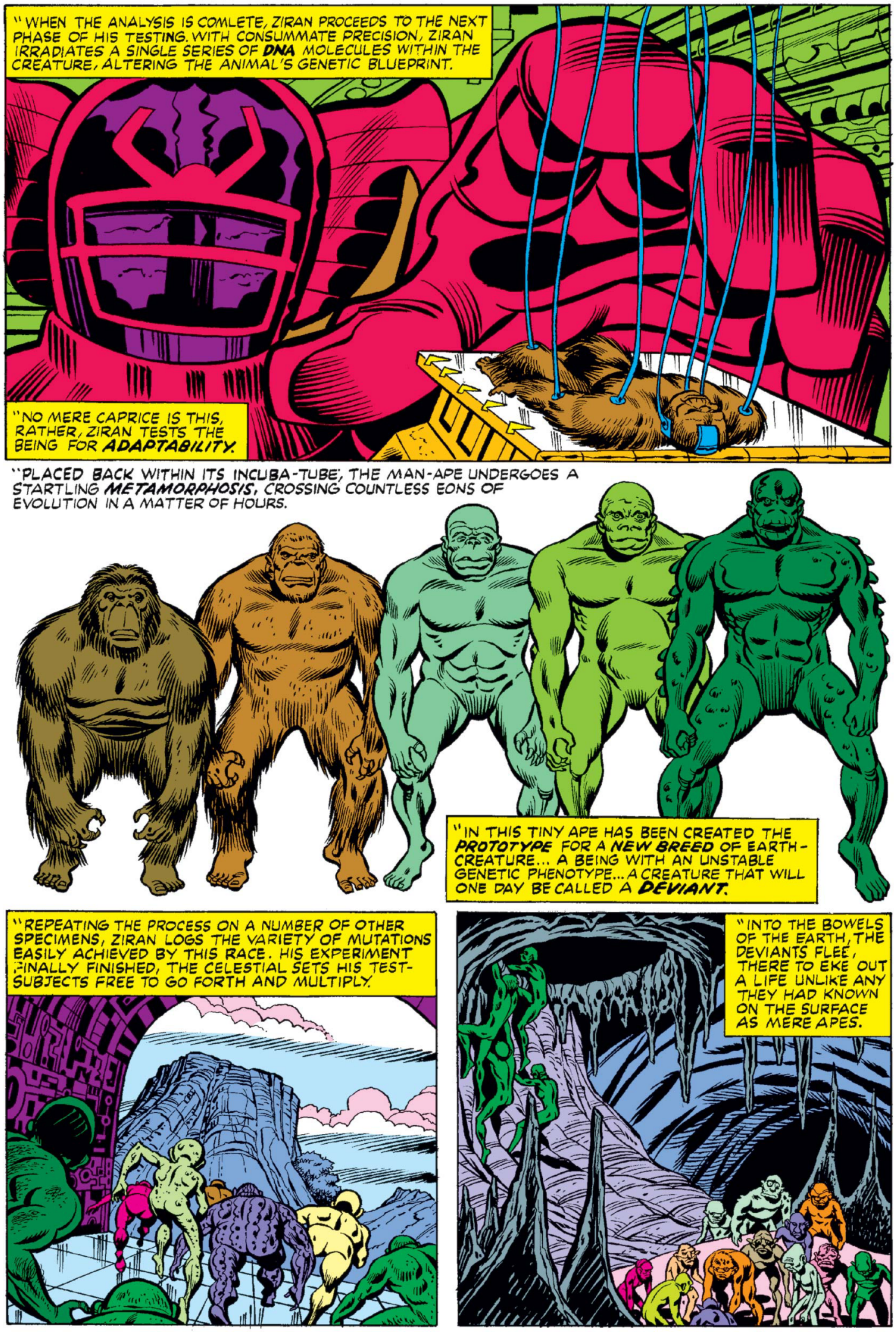


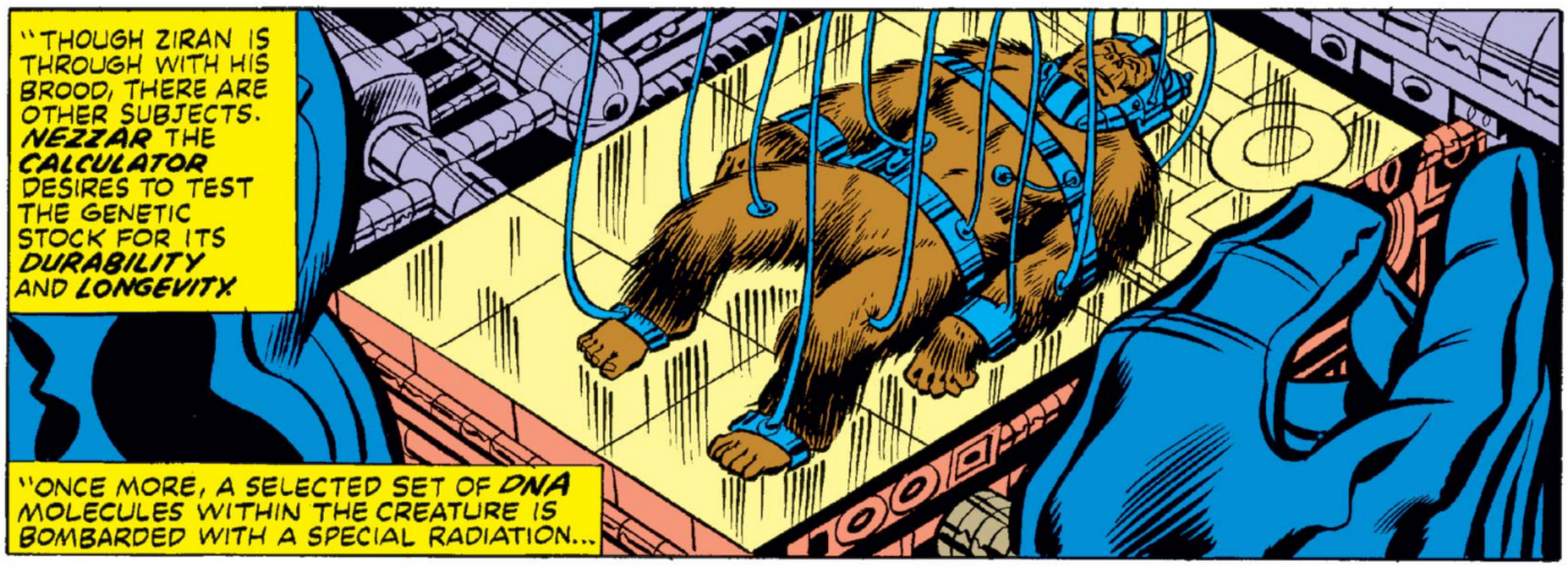
"INSIDE, GAMMENON CAREFULLY ARRANGES THE SPECIMENS WITHIN SPECIALLY-PREPARED INCUBA-TUBES.

"THEN THE GOLDEN CELESTIAL WHEELS ABOUT AND LEAVES. THEY ARE ZIRAN THE TESTER'S RESPONSIBILITY NOW.

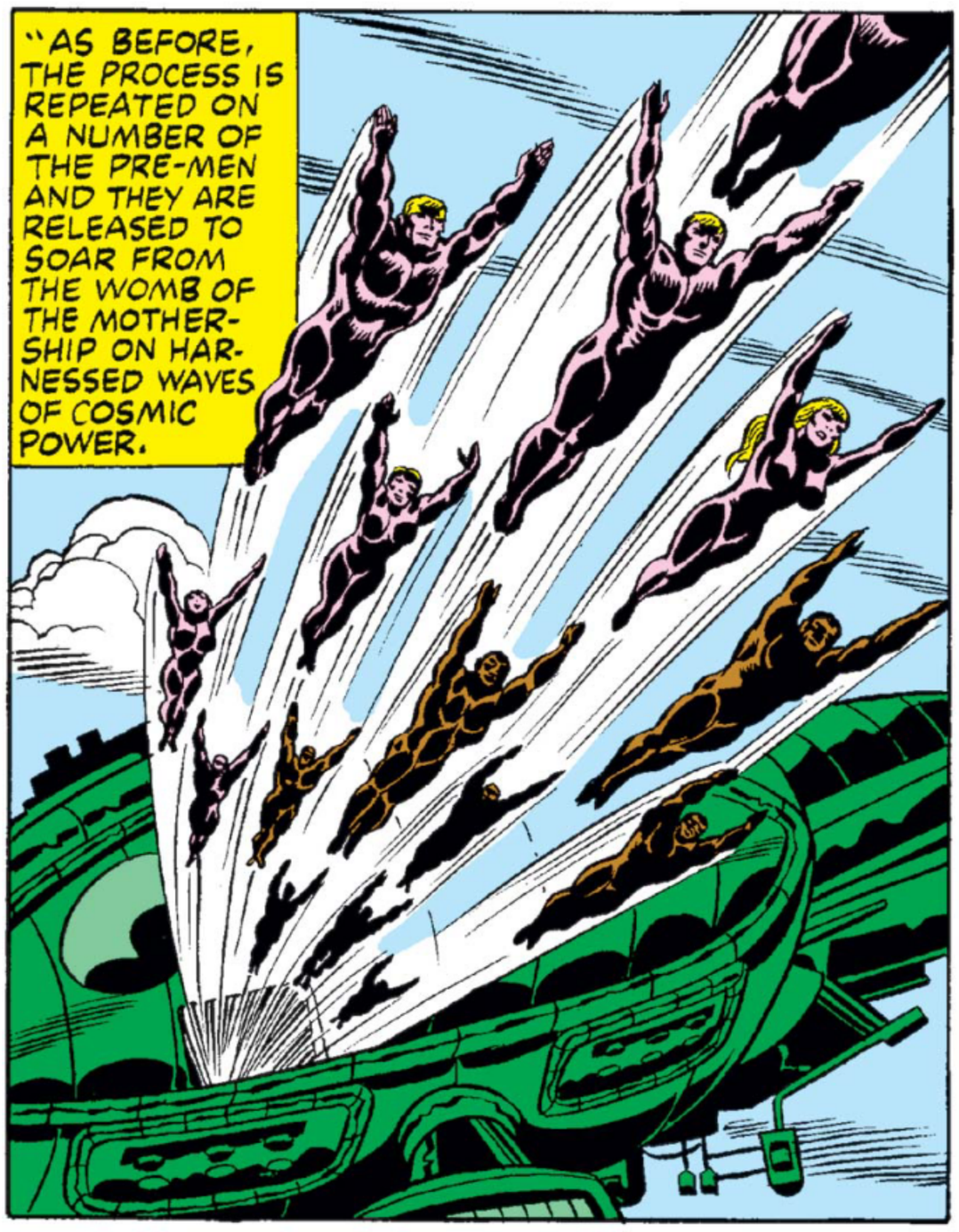
"SELECTING ONE OF THE TINY EARTH-CREATURES AT RANDOM, ZIRAN PLACES IT WITHIN A GENETIC EXPERIMENTATION MODULE...

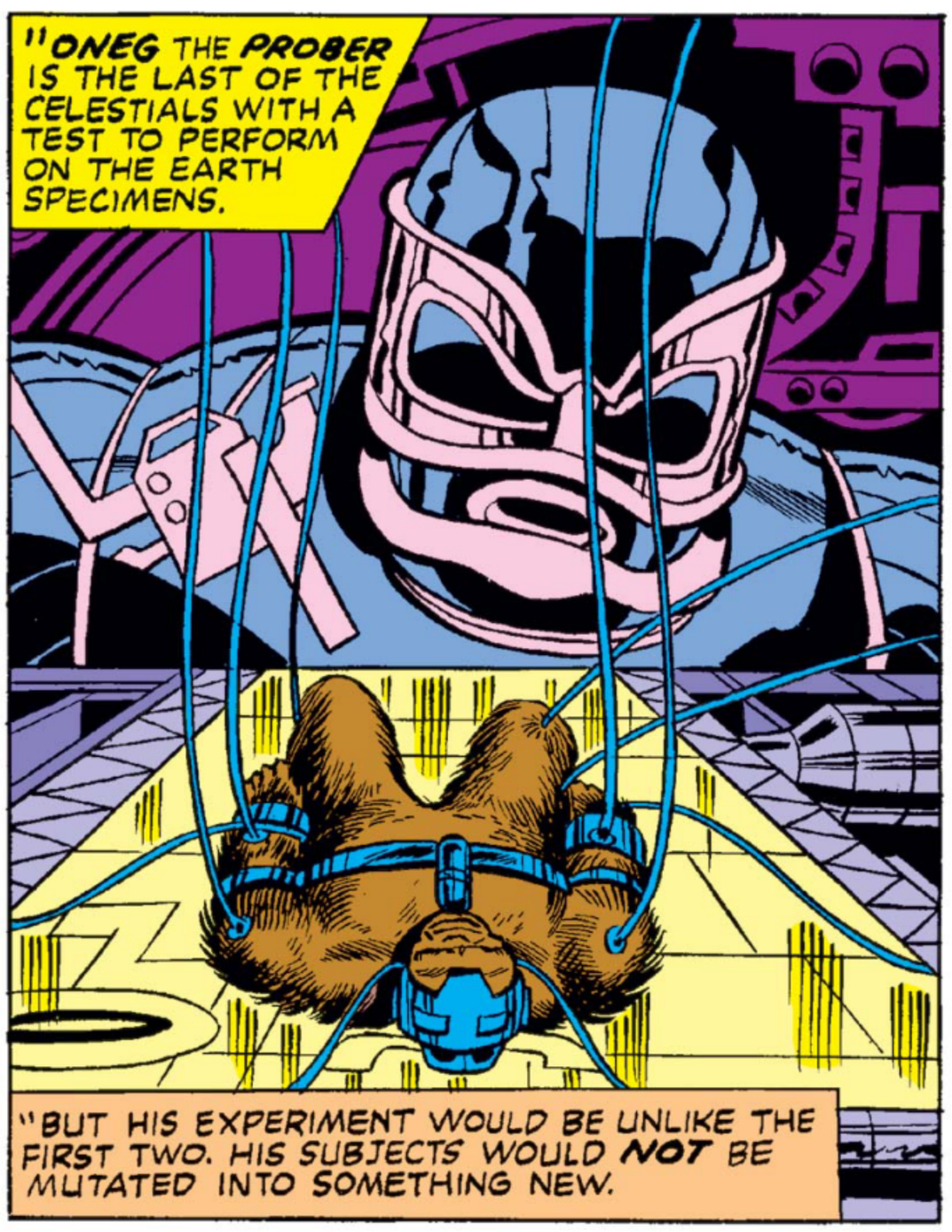
"THERE THE MAN-APE'S EVERY CELL IS ANALYZED AND CODED...

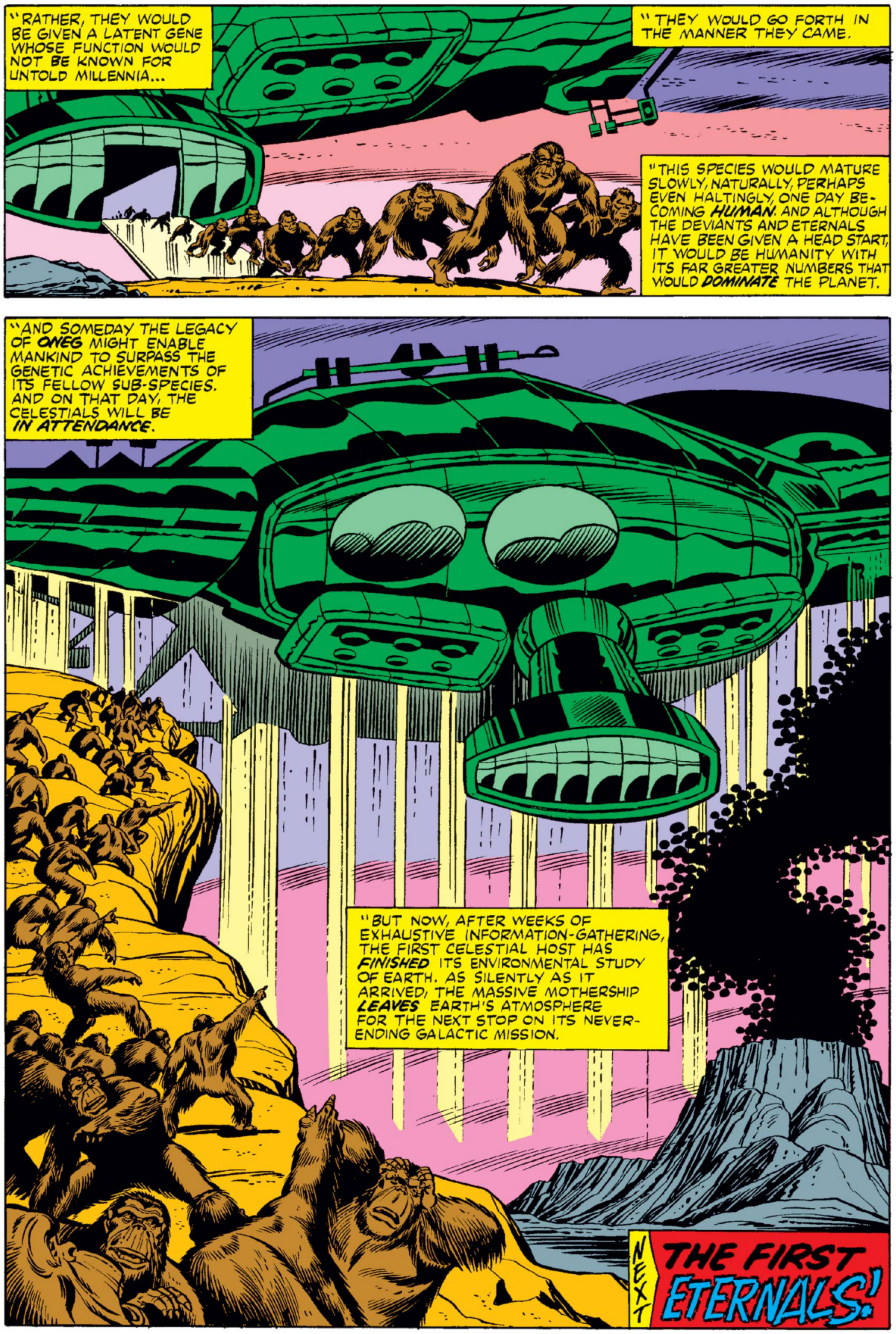

"WHEN THE ANALYSIS IS COMLETE, ZIRAN PROCEEDS TO THE NEXT PHASE OF HIS TESTING. WITH CONSUMMATE PRECISION, ZIRAN IRRADIATES A SINGLE SERIES OF DNA MOLECULES WITHIN THE CREATURE, ALTERING THE ANIMAL'S GENETIC BLUEPRINT.
"NO MERE CAPRICE IS THIS, RATHER, ZIRAN TESTS THE BEING FOR ADAPTABILITY.
"PLACED BACK WITHIN ITS INCUBA-TUBE, THE MAN-APE UNDERGOES A STARTLING METAMORPHOSIS, CROSSING COUNTLESS EONS OF EVOLUTION IN A MATTER OF HOURS.
"IN THIS TINY APE HAS BEEN CREATED THE PROTOTYPE FOR A NEW BREED OF EARTH-CREATURE... A BEING WITH AN UNSTABLE GENETIC PHENOTYPE... A CREATURE THAT WILL ONE DAY BE CALLED A DEVIANT.
"REPEATING THE PROCESS ON A NUMBER OF OTHER SPECIMENS, ZIRAN LOGS THE VARIETY OF MUTATIONS EASILY ACHIEVED BY THIS RACE. HIS EXPERIMENT FINALLY FINISHED, THE CELESTIAL SETS HIS TEST-SUBJECTS FREE TO GO FORTH AND MULTIPLY.
"INTO THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH, THE DEVIANTS FLEE, THERE TO EKE OUT A LIFE UNLIKE ANY THEY HAD KNOWN ON THE SURFACE AS MERE APES.

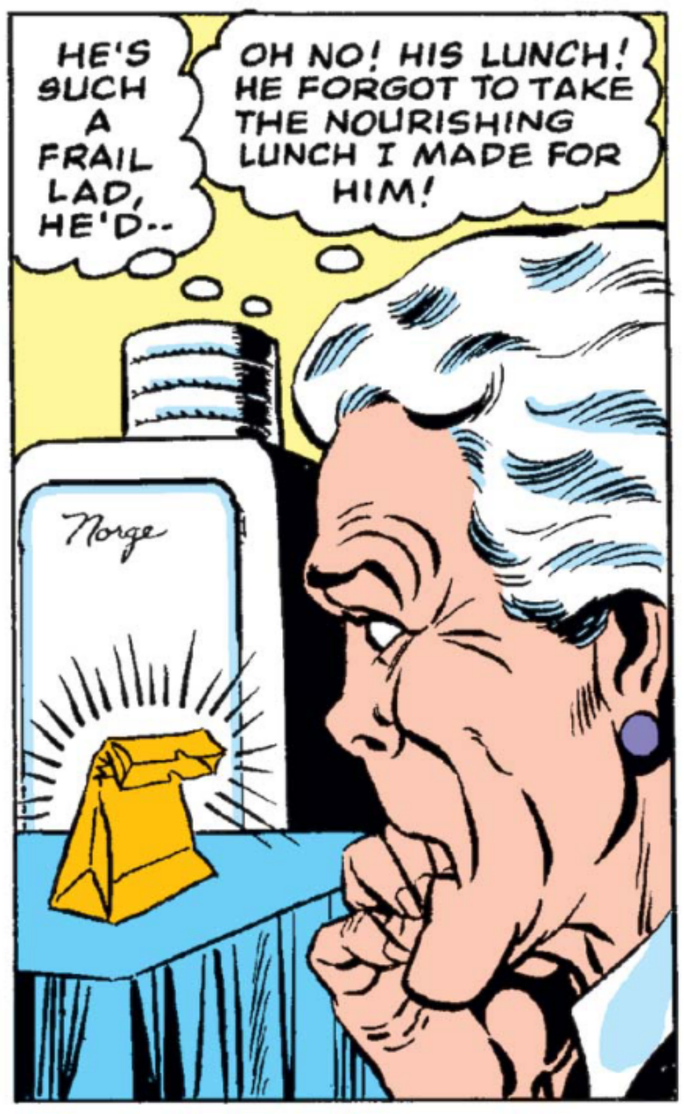

"THOUGH ZIRAN IS THROUGH WITH HIS BROOD, THERE ARE OTHER SUBJECTS. NEZZAR THE CALCULATOR DESIRES TO TEST THE GENETIC STOCK FOR ITS DURABILITY AND LONGEVITY.
"ONCE MORE, A SELECTED SET OF DNA MOLECULES WITHIN THE CREATURE IS BOMBARDED WITH A SPECIAL RADIATION...

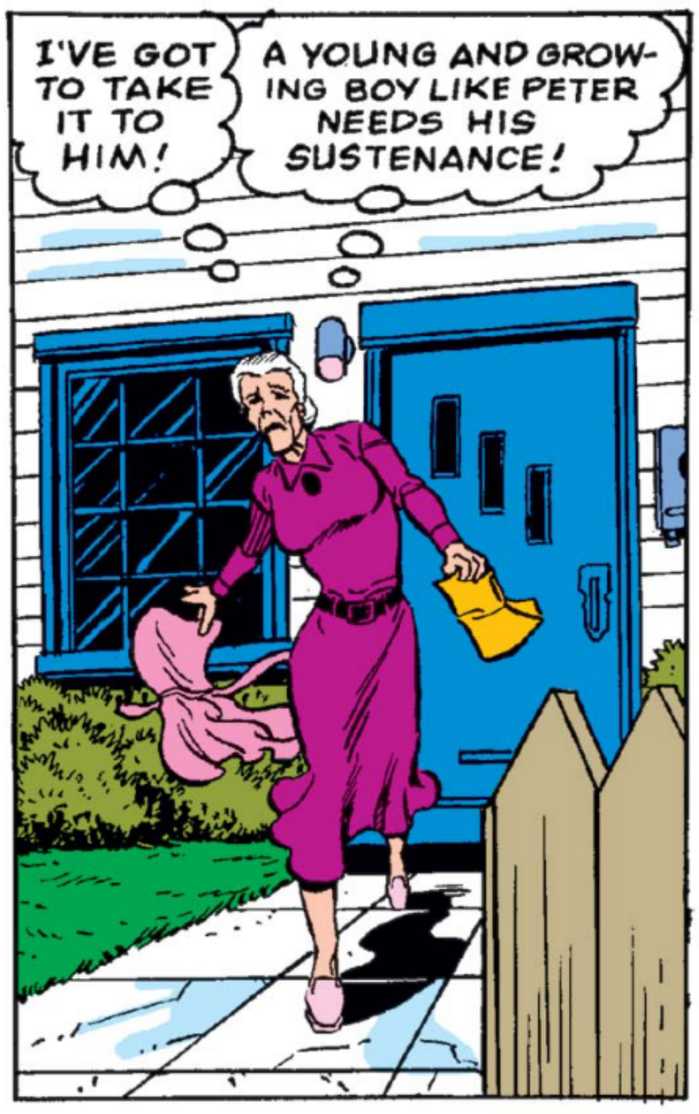
"...AND WITHIN ITS INCUBA-TUBE, THE MAN-APE ALSO UNDERGOES A STARTLING METAMORPHOSIS, ONE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM ITS PREDECESSORS...
"TALL, UPRIGHT, HAIRLESS, POSSESSING THE ABILITY TO TAP THE ENERGY OF THE COSMOS, THIS NEW BREED WOULD ONE DAY BE CALLED AN ETERNAL.


"AS BEFORE, THE PROCESS IS REPEATED ON A NUMBER OF THE PRE-MEN AND THEY ARE RELEASED TO SOAR FROM THE WOMB OF THE MOTHER-SHIP ON HAR-NESSED WAVES OF COSMIC POWER.


"ONEG THE PROBER IS THE LAST OF THE CELESTIALS WITH A TEST TO PERFORM ON THE EARTH SPECIMENS.
"BUT HIS EXPERIMENT WOULD BE UNLIKE THE FIRST TWO. HIS SUBJECTS WOULD NOT BE MUTATED INTO SOMETHING NEW.


"RATHER, THEY WOULD BE GIVEN A LATENT GENE WHOSE FUNCTION WOULD NOT BE KNOWN FOR UNTOLD MILLENNIA...
"THEY WOULD GO FORTH IN THE MANNER THEY CAME.
"THIS SPECIES WOULD MATURE SLOWLY, NATURALLY, PERHAPS EVEN HALTINGLY, ONE DAY BECOMING HUMAN. AND ALTHOUGH THE DEVIANTS AND ETERNALS HAVE BEEN GIVEN A HEAD START, IT WOULD BE HUMANITY WITH ITS FAR GREATER NUMBERS THAT WOULD DOMINATE THE PLANET.
"AND SOMEDAY THE LEGACY OF OMEG MIGHT ENABLE MANKIND TO SURPASS THE GENETIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF ITS FELLOW SUB-SPECIES. AND ON THAT DAY, THE CELESTIALS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.
"BUT NOW, AFTER WEEKS OF EXHAUSTIVE INFORMATION-GATHERING, THE FIRST CELESTIAL HOST HAS FINISHED ITS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY OF EARTH. AS SILENTLY AS IT ARRIVED, THE MASSIVE MOTHERSHIP LEAVES EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE FOR THE NEXT STOP ON ITS NEVER-ENDING GALACTIC MISSION.
NEXT
THE FIRST ETERNALS!

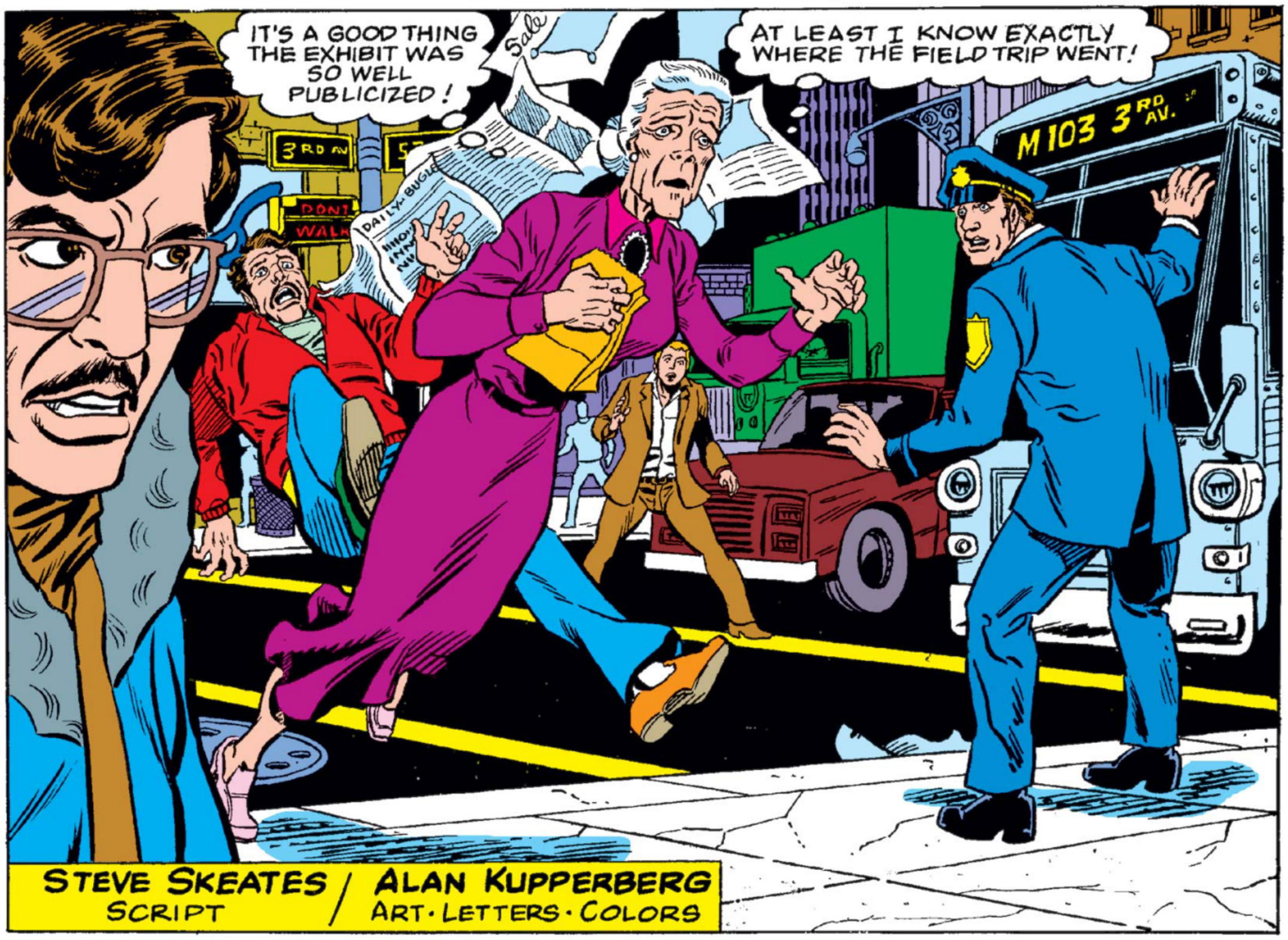




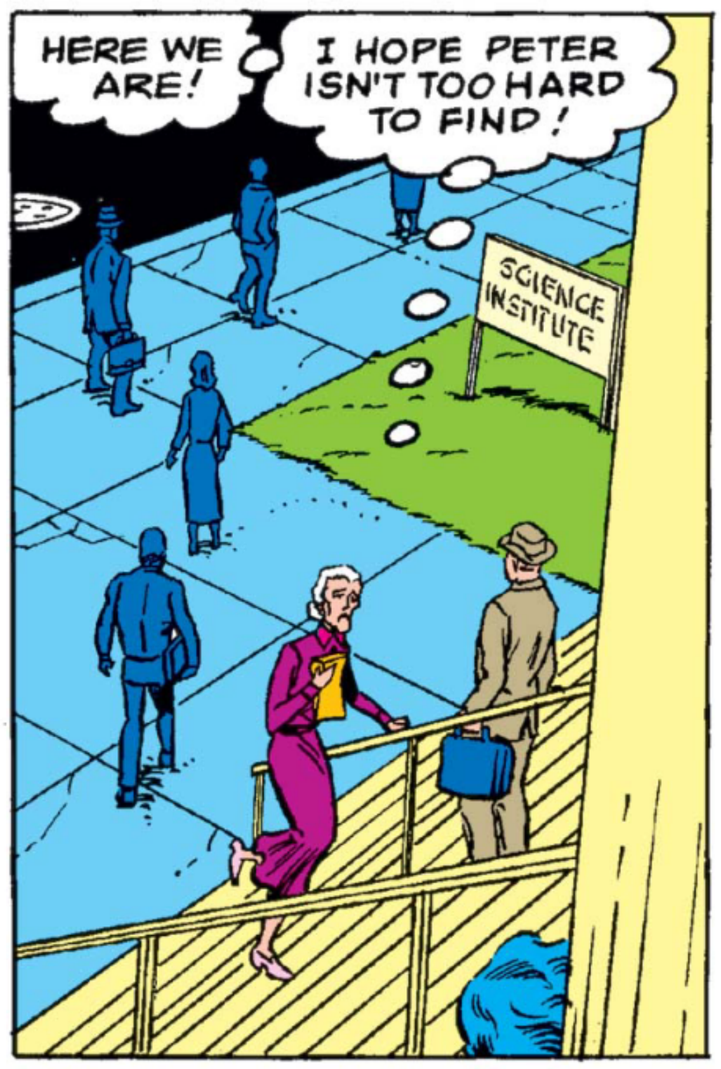
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **A STUNNING SAGA OF AN IMPROBABLE REALITY!**

AND SO IT BEGINS -- A TURBULENT AND TANTALIZING STORY WHICH ANSWERS THAT PULSE-POUNDING, AGE-OLD QUESTION (WHICH YOU THOUGHT WE'D NEVER ASK--)

WHAT IF ALINT MAY INSTEAD OF HER NEPHEW PETER HAD BEEN BITTEN BY THAT RADIOACTIVE SPIDER?



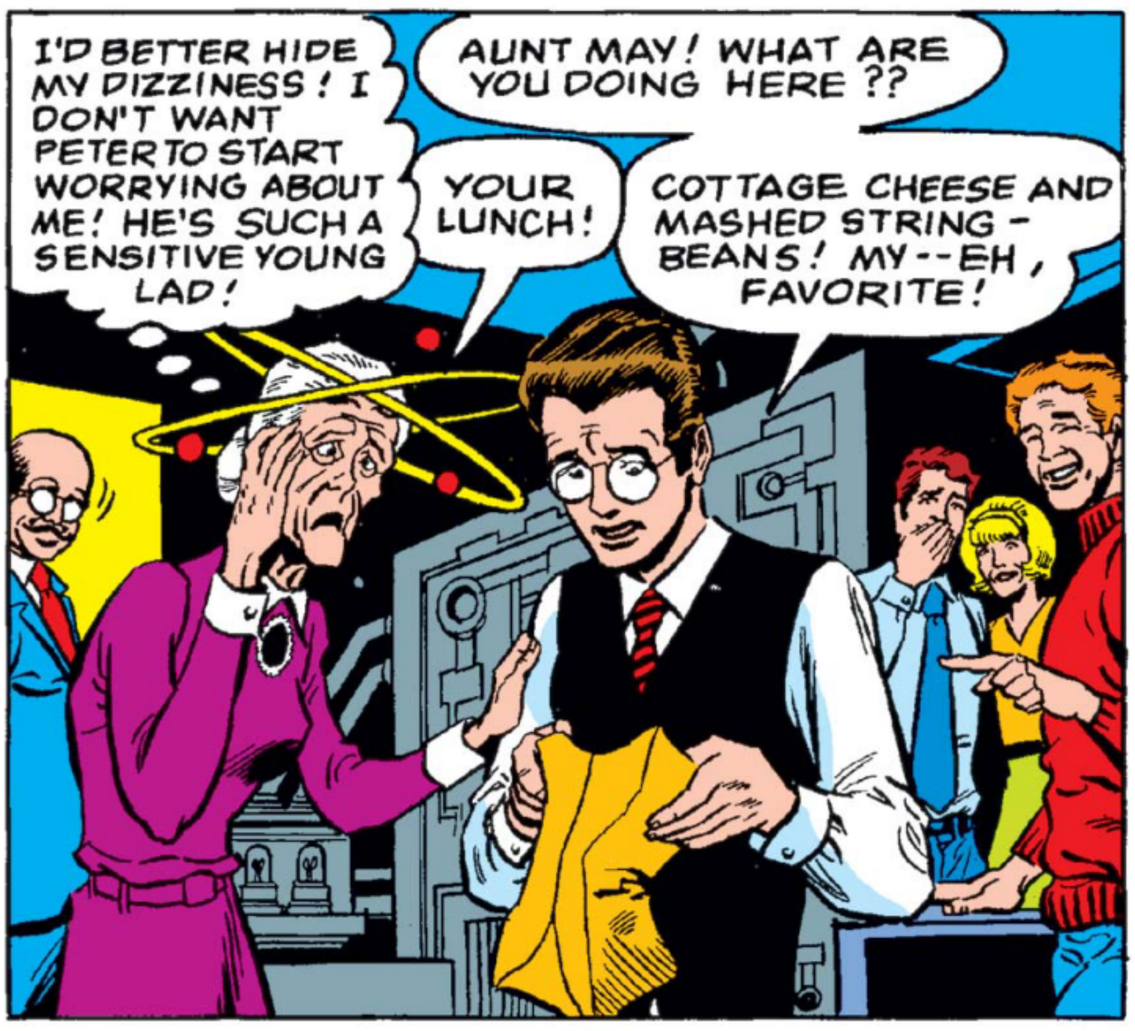
STEVE SKEATES / ALAN KUPPERBERG
SCRIPT / ART · LETTERS · COLORS

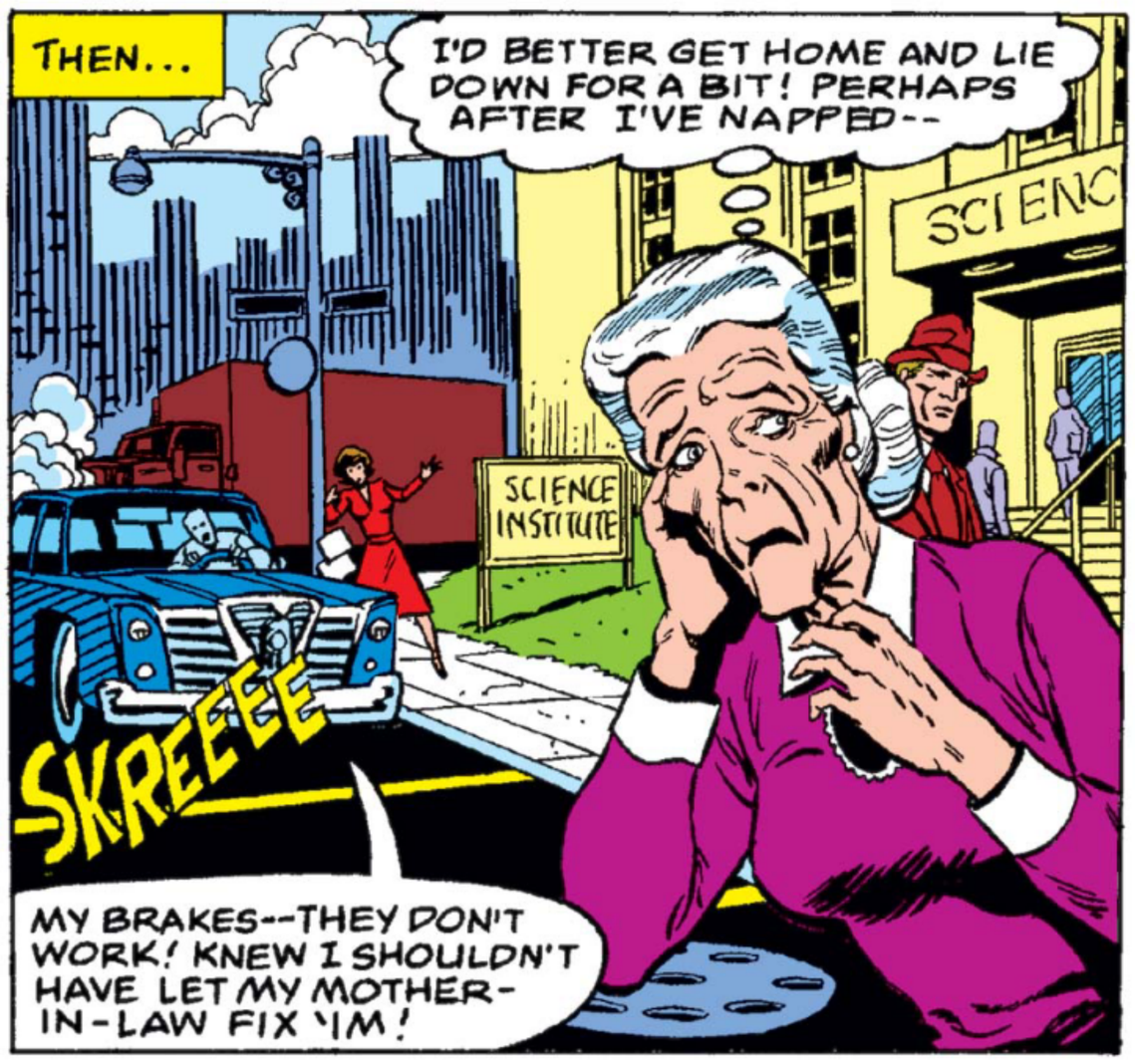

HERE WE ARE!
I HOPE PETER ISN'T TOO HARD TO FIND!
SCIENCE INSTITUTE

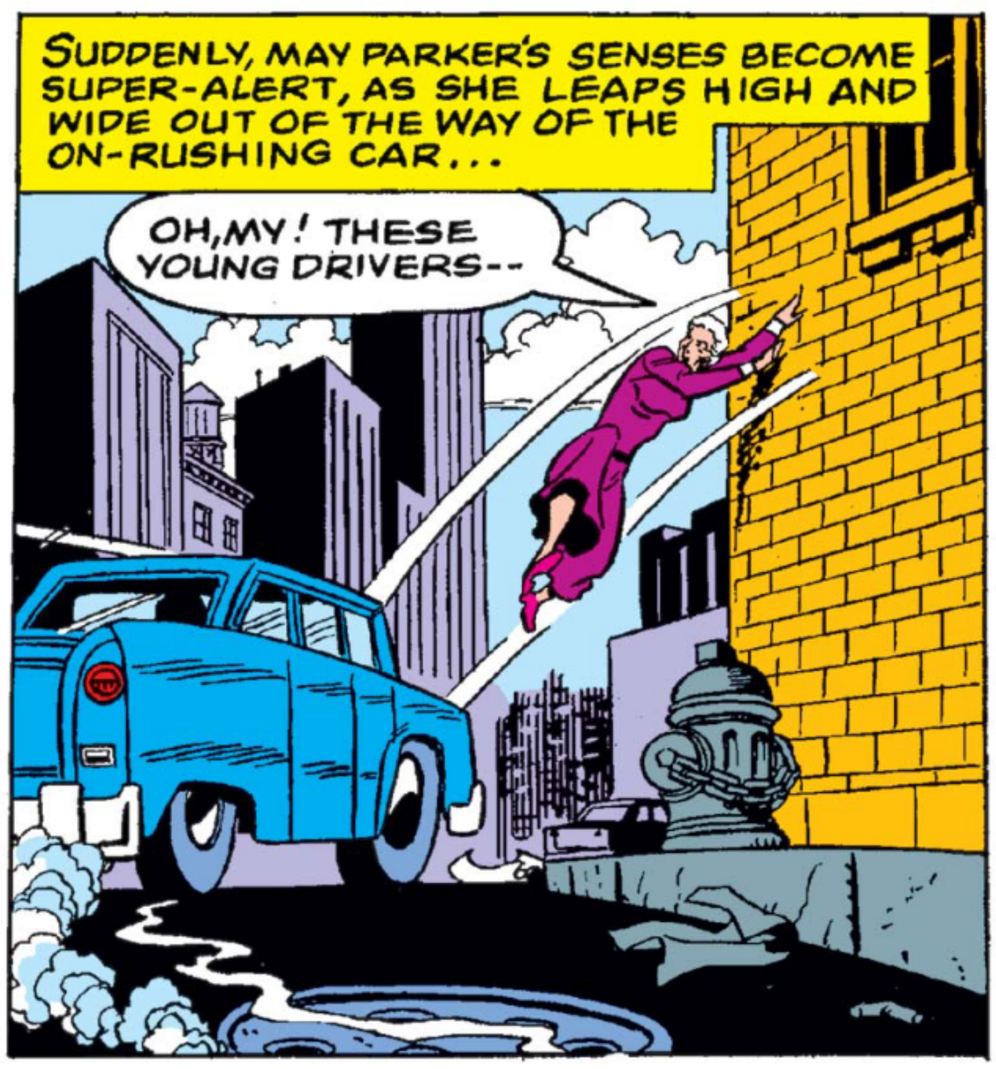
HIS CLASS HAS GOT TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE!
UN-BEKNOWNST TO MAY PARKER, A RADIO-ACTIVE SPIDER IS ON THE LOOSE!

AND...
YOWCH!
THAT EIGHT-LEGGED LITTLE BUG BIT ME!

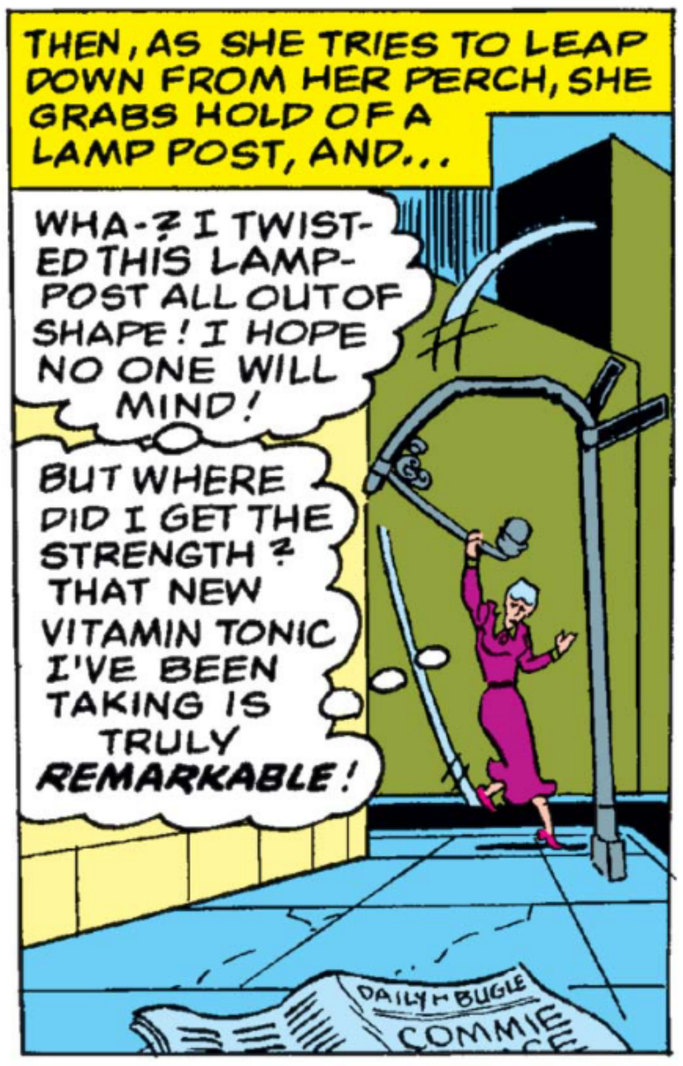
I FEEL DIZZY! PERHAPS I'M ALLERGIC TO SPIDER BITES! BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I --
OHH! THERE'S PETER NOW!


I'D BETTER HIDE MY DIZZINESS! I DON'T WANT PETER TO START WORRYING ABOUT ME! HE'S SUCH A SENSITIVE YOUNG LAD!
AUNT MAY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE??
YOUR LUNCH!
COTTAGE CHEESE AND MASHED STRING-BEANS! MY--EH, FAVORITE!

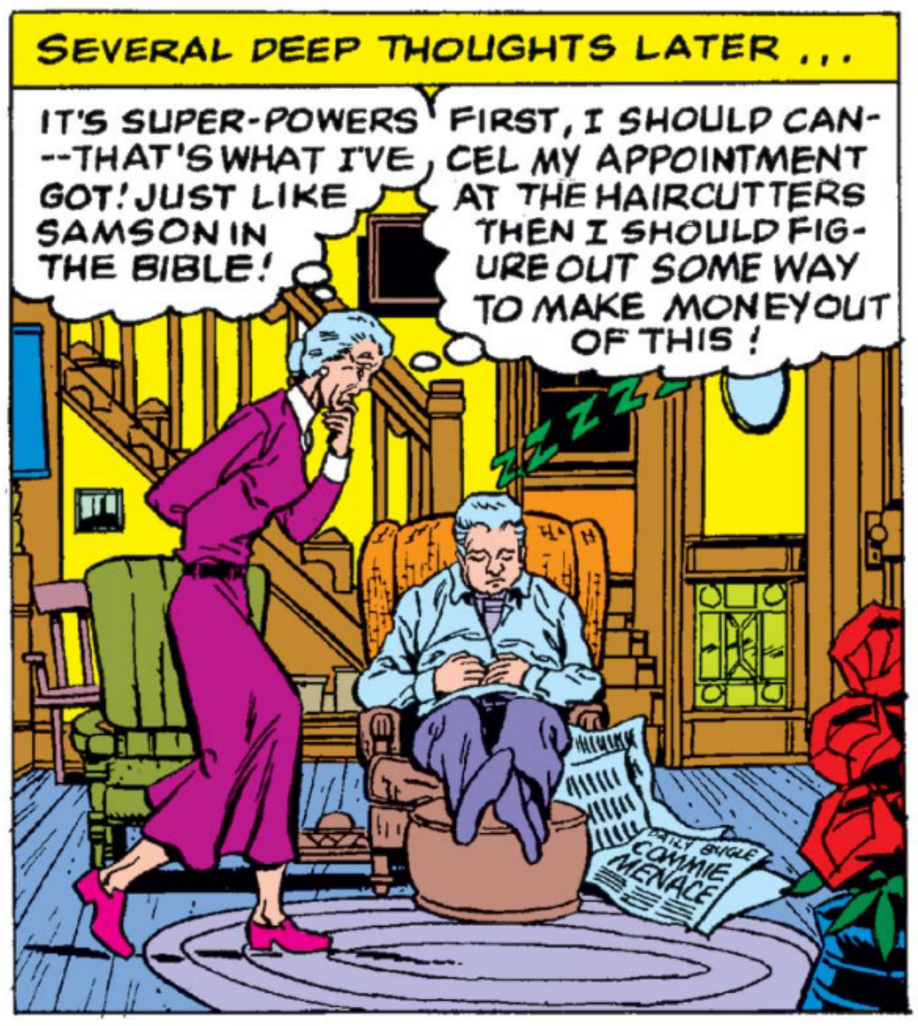

THEN...
I'D BETTER GET HOME AND LIE DOWN FOR A BIT! PERHAPS AFTER I'VE NAPPED--
SCIENC
SCIENCE INSTITUTE
SKREEEE
MY BRAKES--THEY DON'T WORK! KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET MY MOTHER-IN-LAW FIX 'IM!

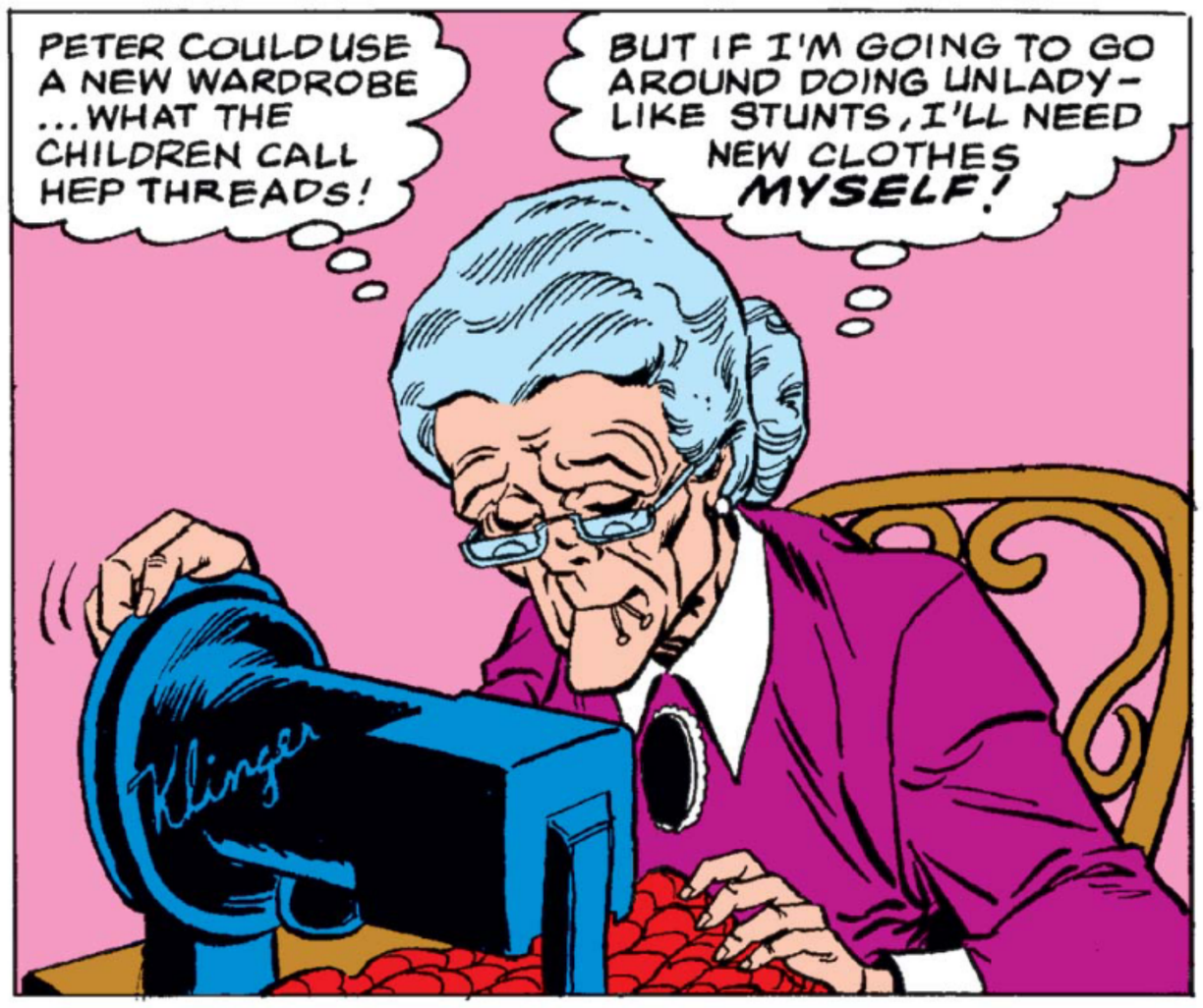

SUDDENLY, MAY PARKER'S SENSES BECOME SUPER-ALERT, AS SHE LEAPS HIGH AND WIDE OUT OF THE WAY OF THE ON-RUSHING CAR...
OH, MY! THESE YOUNG DRIVERS--

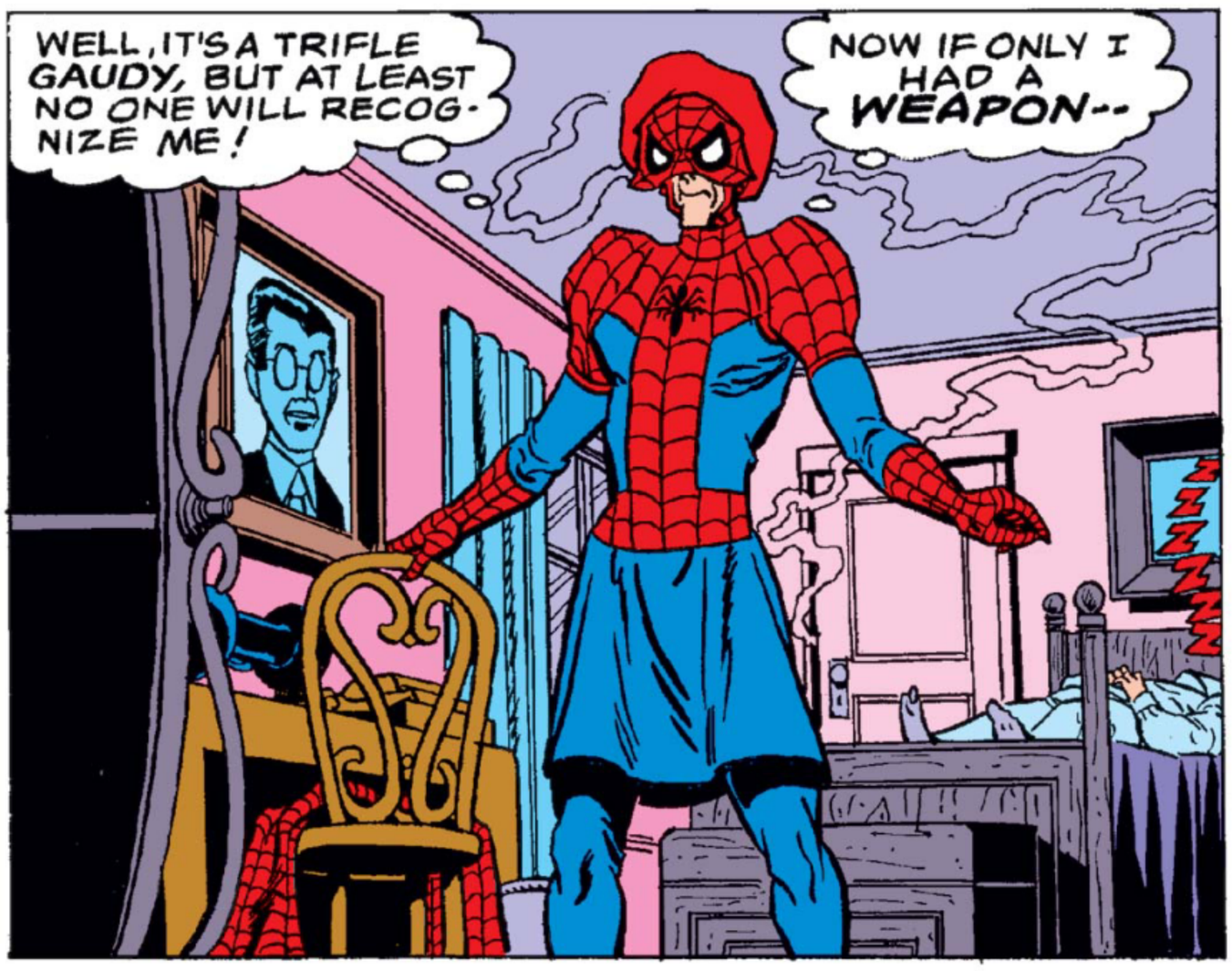
...ONLY TO FIND HERSELF...
ON THE SIDE OF A BUILDING! TWO STORIES UP!!
OH, MY!


THEN, AS SHE TRIES TO LEAP DOWN FROM HER PERCH, SHE GRABS HOLD OF A LAMP POST, AND...
WHA-? I TWISTED THIS LAMPPOST ALL OUT OF SHAPE! I HOPE NO ONE WILL MIND!
BUT WHERE DID I GET THE STRENGTH? THAT NEW VITAMIN TONIC I'VE BEEN TAKING IS TRULY REMARKABLE!
DAILY BUGLE

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ME! SOMETHING STRANGE! I FEEL WORSE THAN THE TIME I DRANK THAT GLASS OF ELDERBERRY WINE!
I OUGHT TO GET HOME --THINK THIS THING OUT!
WHOOOSH!


SEVERAL DEEP THOUGHTS LATER...
IT'S SUPER-POWERS --THAT'S WHAT I'VE GOT! JUST LIKE SAMSON IN THE BIBLE!
FIRST, I SHOULD CANCEL MY APPOINTMENT AT THE HAIRCUTTERS THEN I SHOULD FIGURE OUT SOME WAY TO MAKE MONEY OUT OF THIS!
ZZZZ
DAILY BUGLE
COMMIE MENACE


PETER COULD USE A NEW WARDROBE ...WHAT THE CHILDREN CALL HEP THREADS!
BUT IF I'M GOING TO GO AROUND DOING UNLADY-LIKE STUNTS, I'LL NEED NEW CLOTHES MYSELF!
Klinger

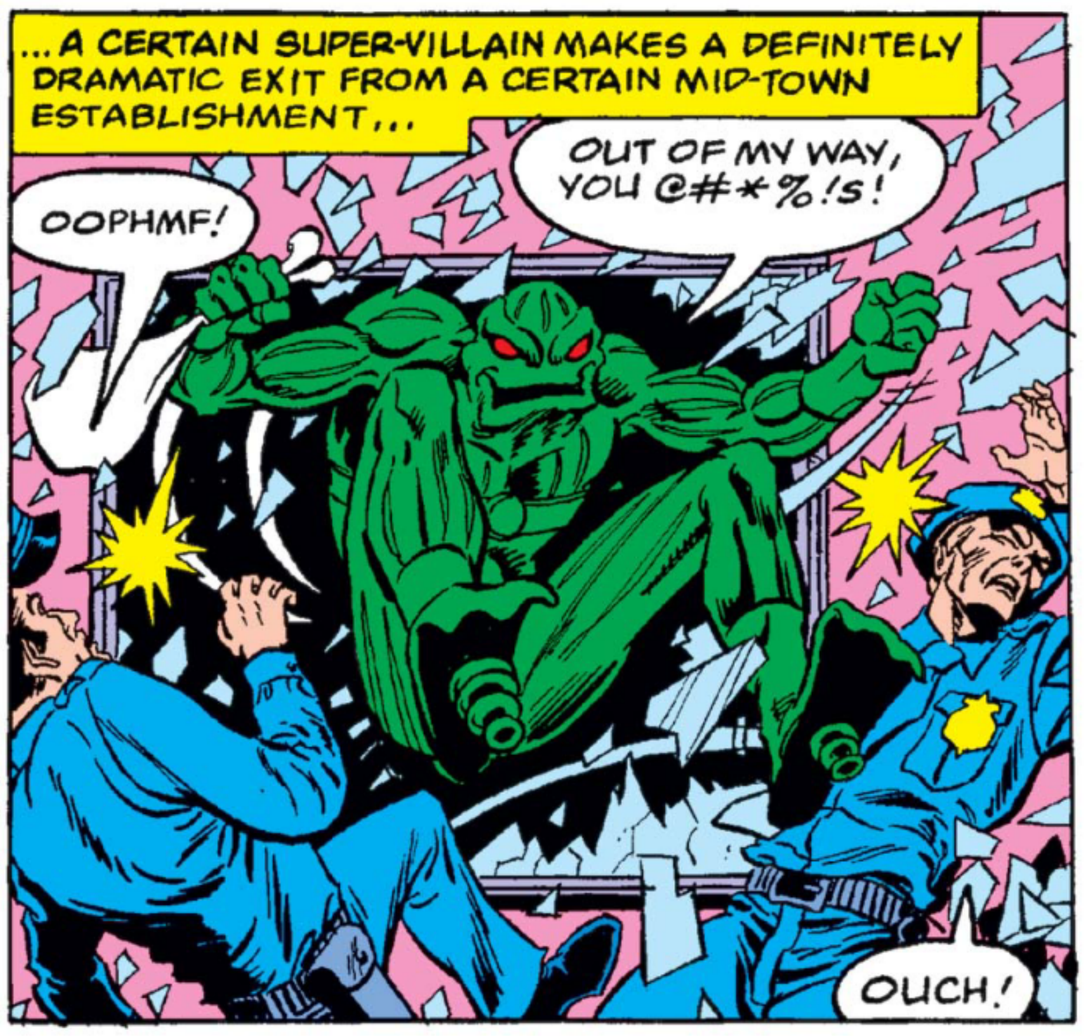

WELL, IT'S A TRIFLE GAUDY, BUT AT LEAST NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE ME!
NOW IF ONLY I HAD A WEAPON--
ZZZZZZZ

THAT SMELL--
MY GOODNESS! THE BREAD I WAS BAKING! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT!

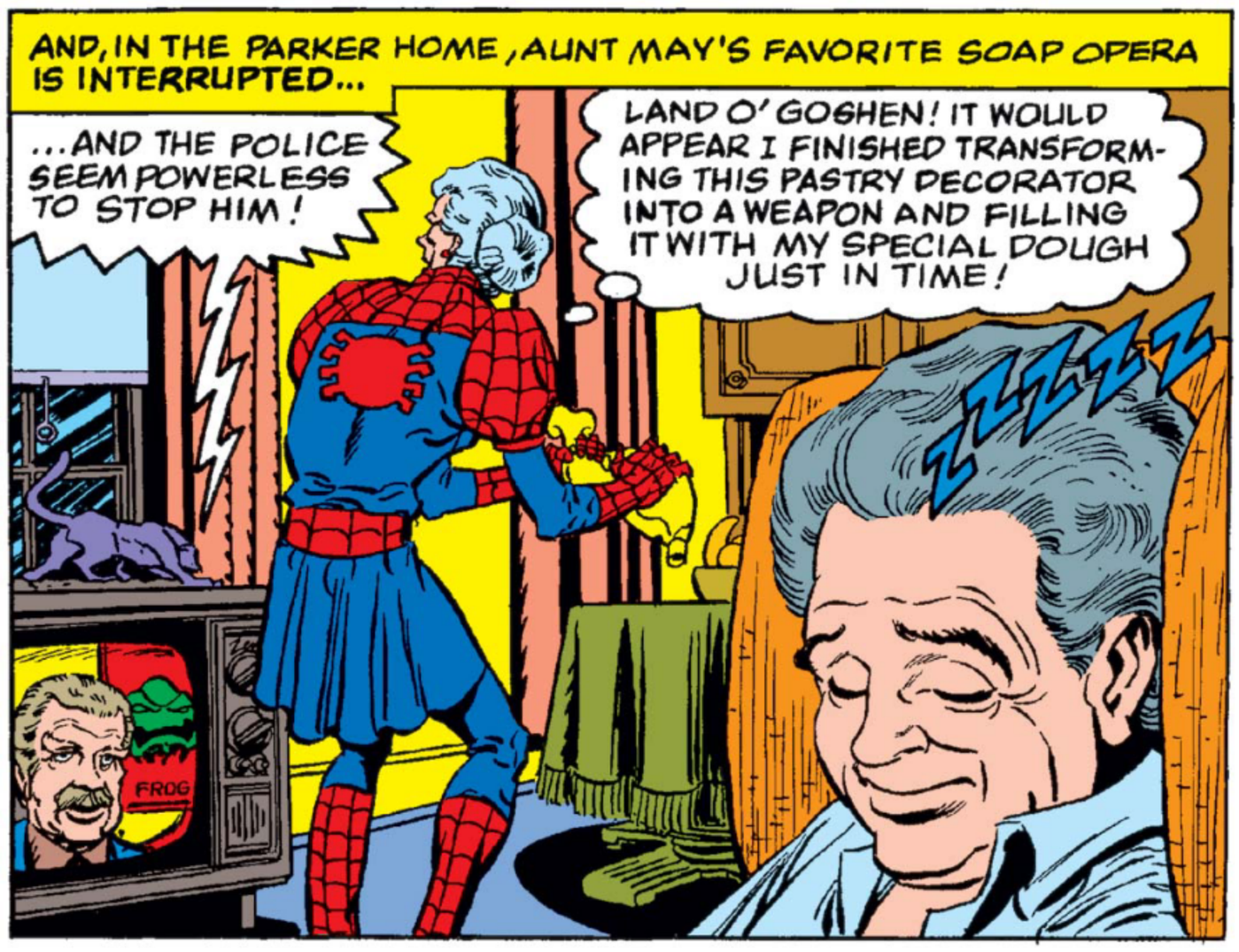
GOOD GOSH! THE DOUGH'S EXPANDING TREMENDOUSLY --FILLING THE WHOLE KITCHEN!
I MUST HAVE USED TOO MUCH YEAST!

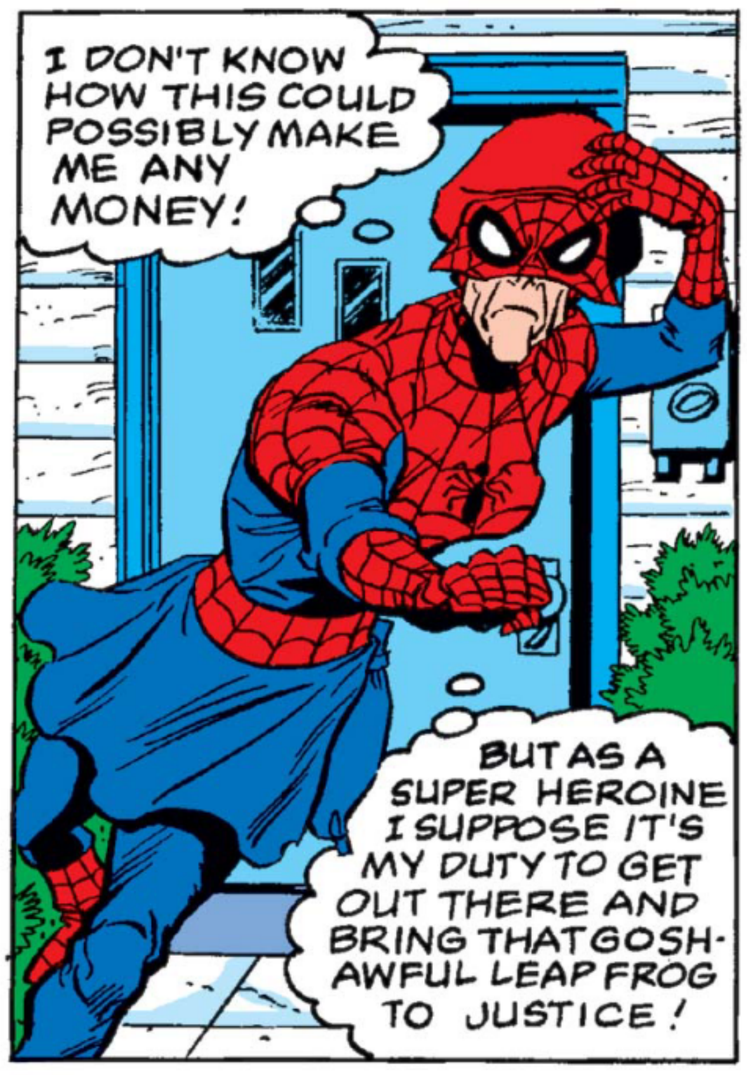
HMM--WAIT JUST A MOMENT NOW--PERHAPS THIS IS JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

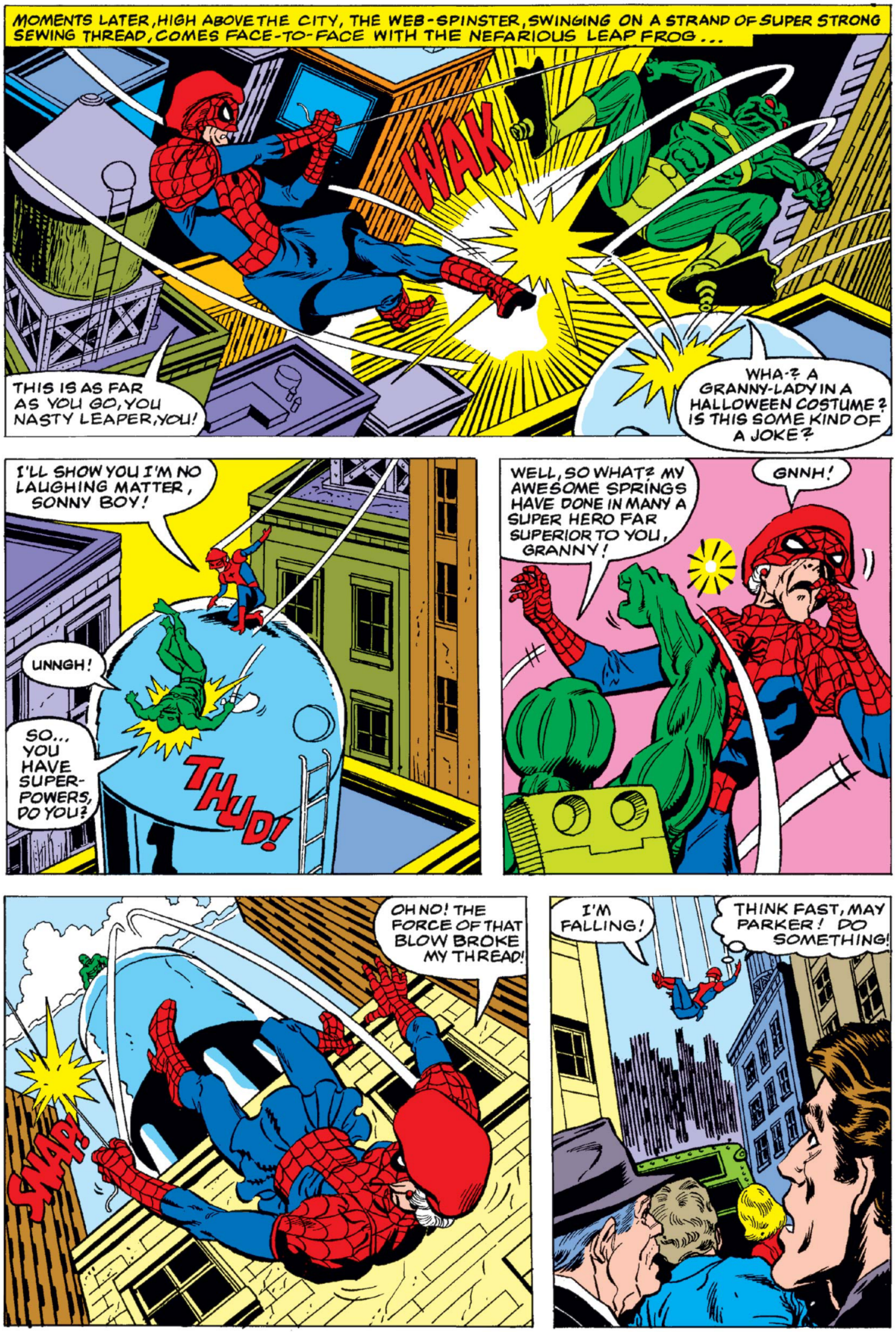
MEANWHILE, WITH A SPRING IN HIS STEP...
SPROING!

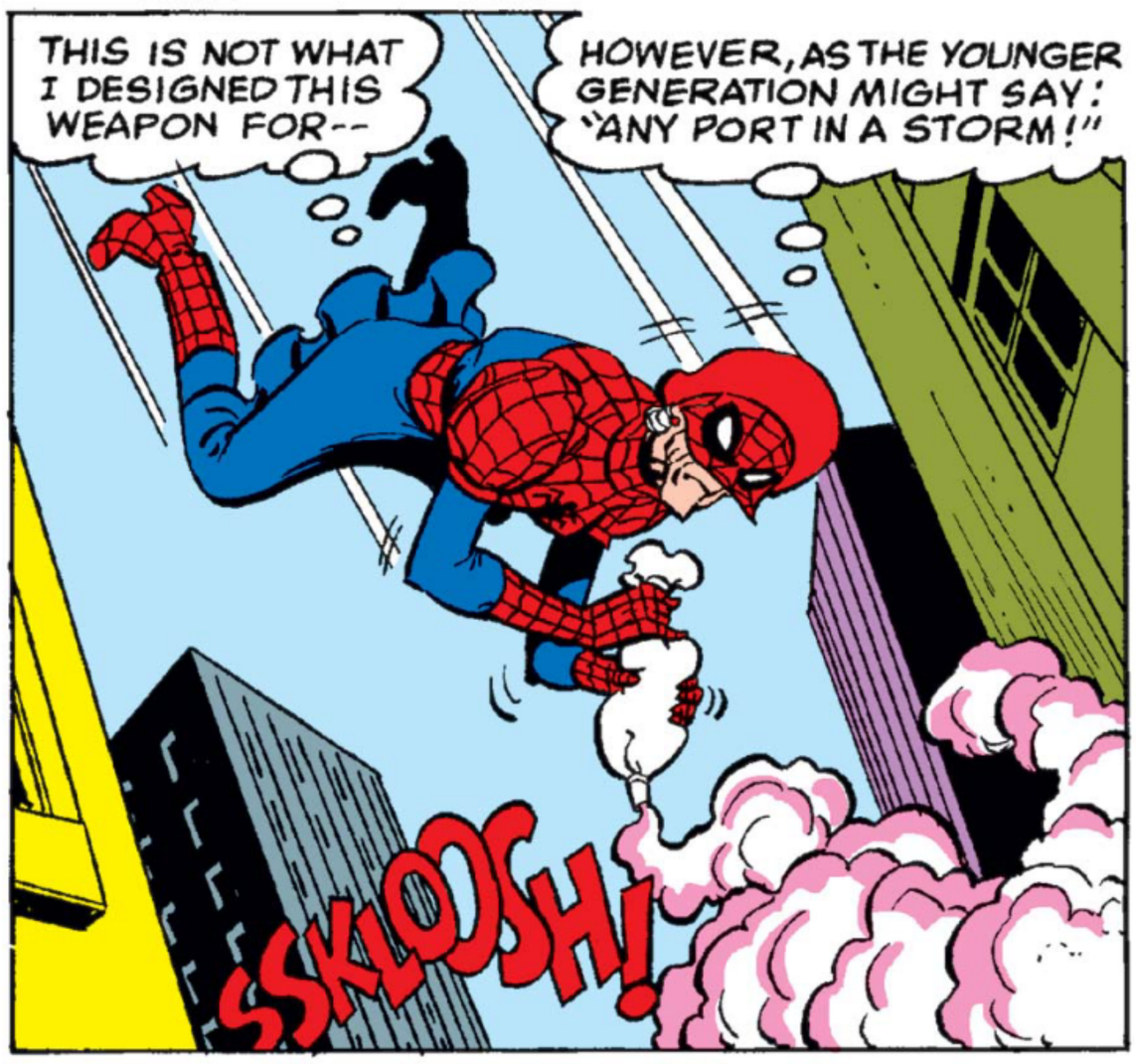

...A CERTAIN SUPER-VILLAIN MAKES A DEFINITELY DRAMATIC EXIT FROM A CERTAIN MID-TOWN ESTABLISHMENT...
OOPHMF!
OUT OF MY WAY, YOU @#*%!S!
OUCH!

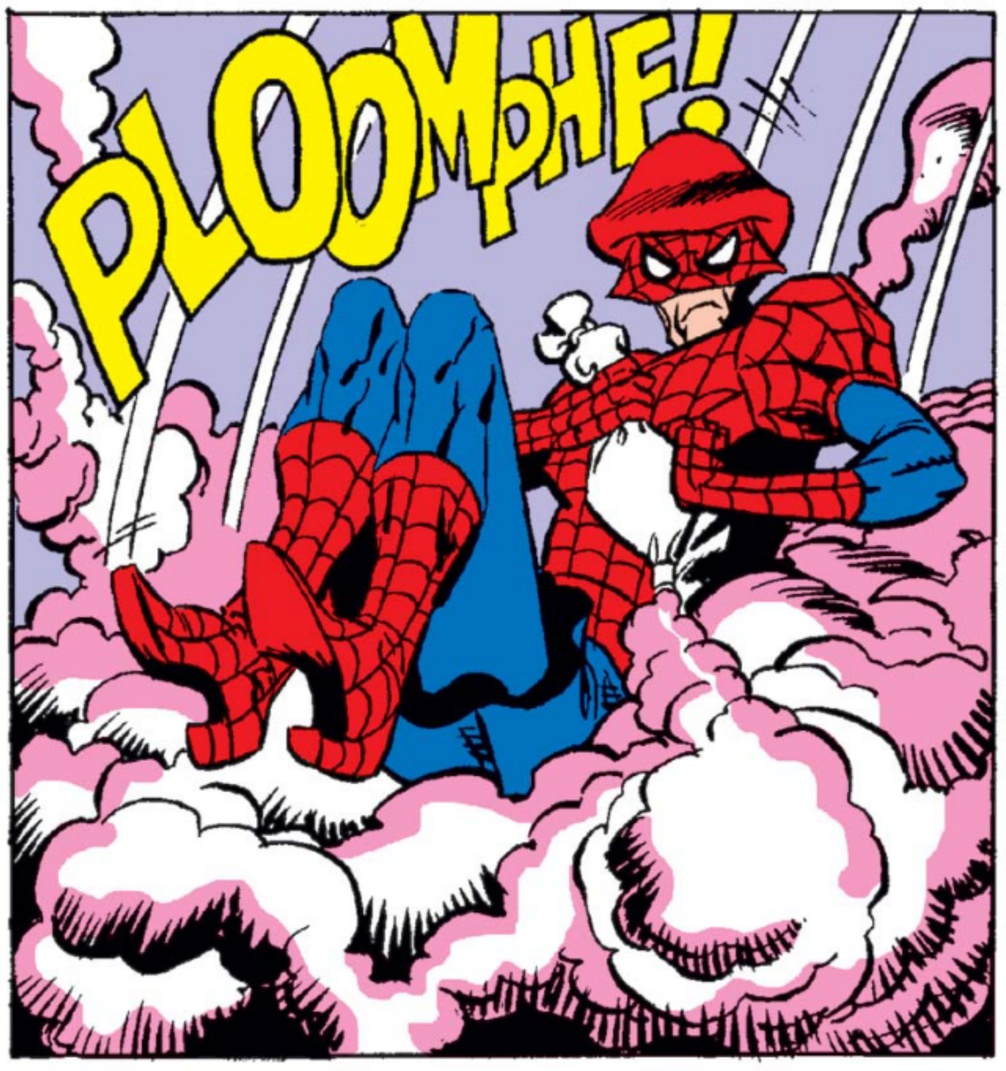
THIS IS INTREPID WARREN SAVIN BRINGING YOU A SPECIAL REPORT!
QUOINK!
THE INFAMOUS LEAP FROG HAS JUST ROBBED A MID-MANHATTAN CANDY STORE IN BROAD DAYLIGHT...

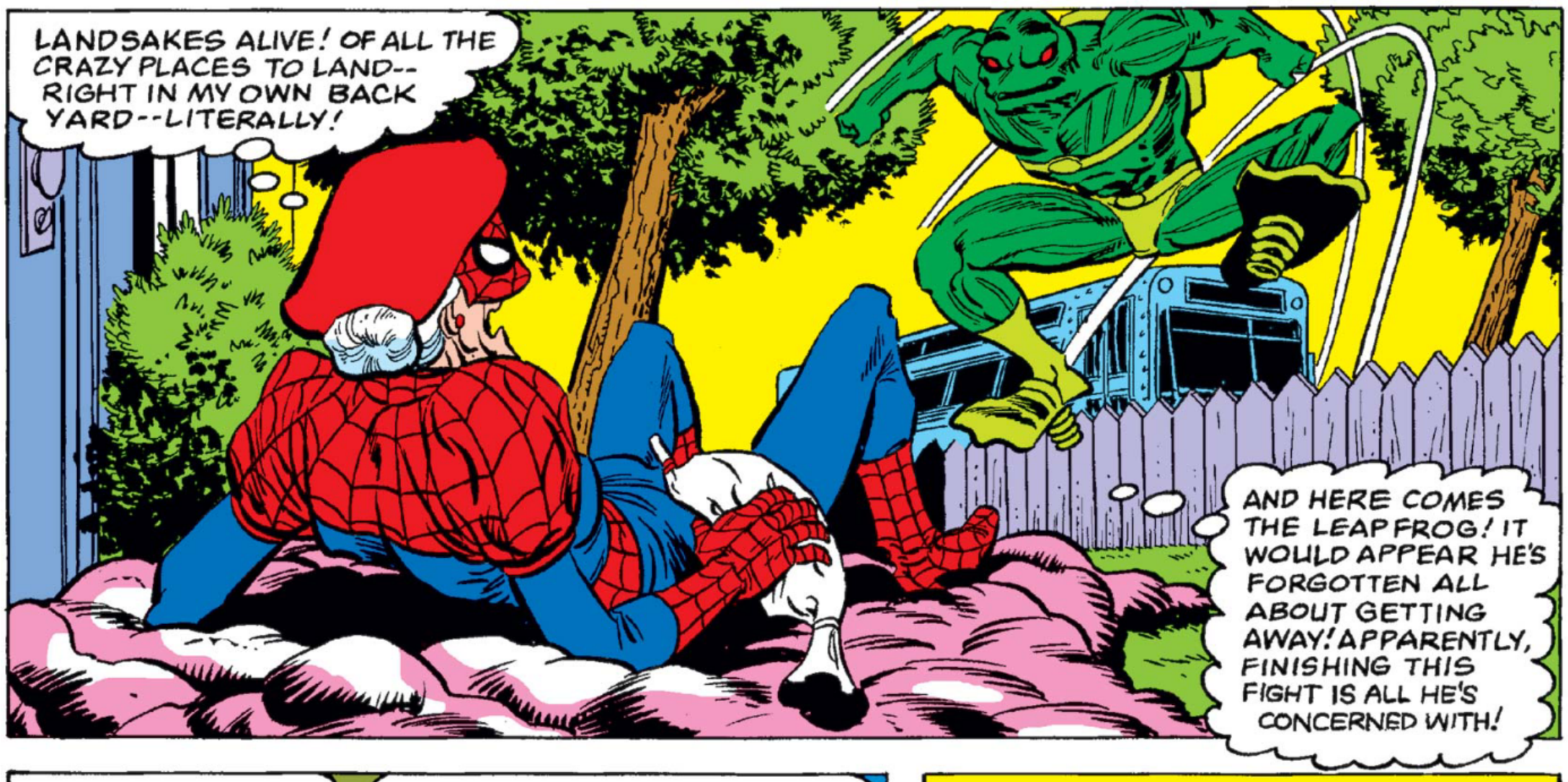

AND, IN THE PARKER HOME, AUNT MAY'S FAVORITE SOAP OPERA IS INTERRUPTED...
...AND THE POLICE SEEM POWERLESS TO STOP HIM!
LAND O' GOSHEN! IT WOULD APPEAR I FINISHED TRANSFORMING THIS PASTRY DECORATOR INTO A WEAPON AND FILLING IT WITH MY SPECIAL DOUGH JUST IN TIME!
FROG

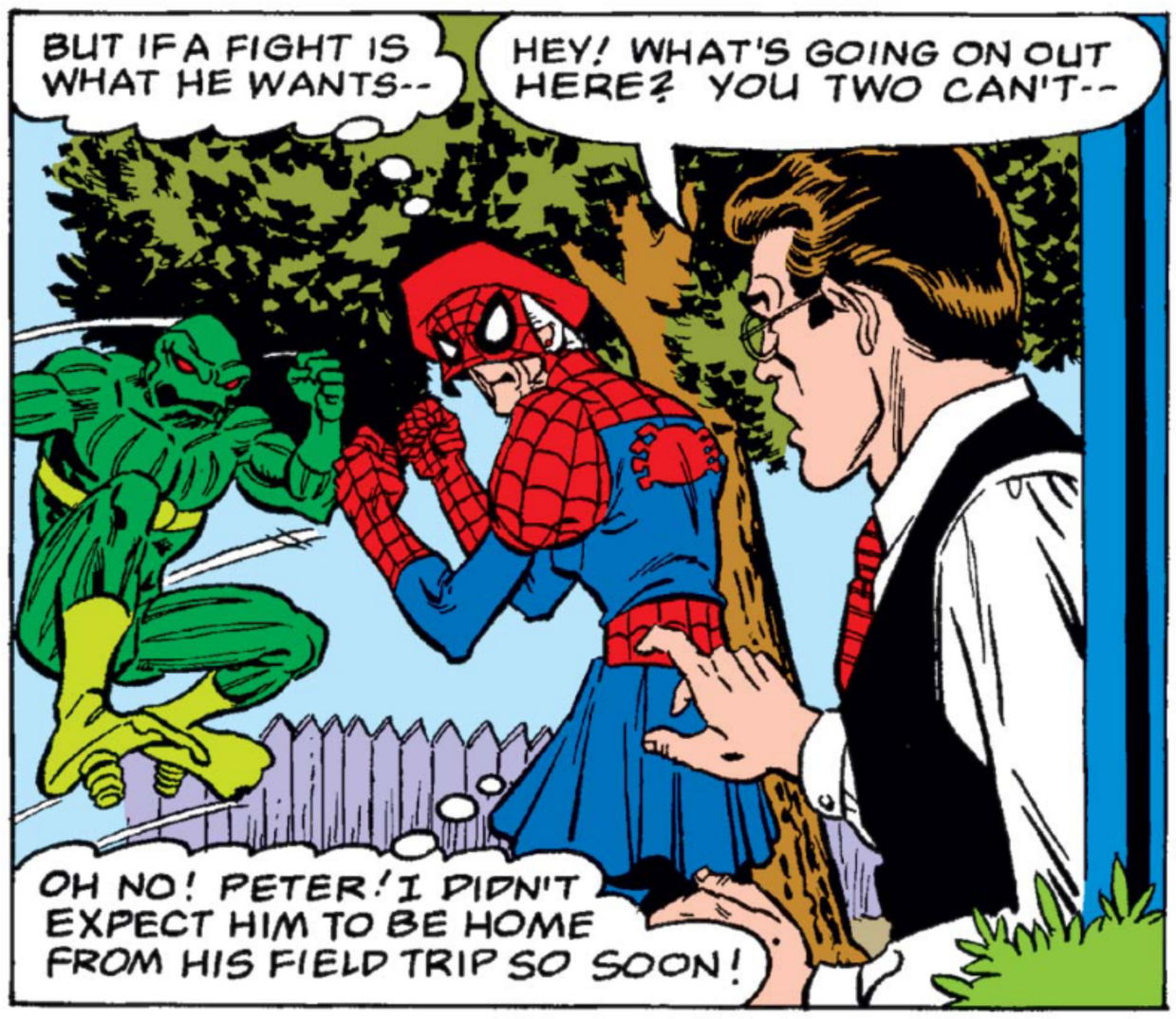

I DON'T KNOW HOW THIS COULD POSSIBLY MAKE ME ANY MONEY!
BUT AS A SUPER HEROINE I SUPPOSE IT'S MY DUTY TO GET OUT THERE AND BRING THAT GOSH-AWFUL LEAP FROG TO JUSTICE!


MOMENTS LATER, HIGH ABOVE THE CITY, THE WEB-SPINSTER, SWINGING ON A STRAND OF SUPER STRONG SEWING THREAD, COMES FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE NEFARIOUS LEAP FROG...
WAK
THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO, YOU NASTY LEAPER, YOU!
WHA-? A GRANNY-LADY IN A HALLOWEEN COSTUME? IS THIS SOME KIND OF A JOKE?
I'LL SHOW YOU I'M NO LAUGHING MATTER, SONNY BOY!
UNNGH!
SO... YOU HAVE SUPER-POWERS, DO YOU?
THUD!
WELL, SO WHAT? MY AWESOME SPRINGS HAVE DONE IN MANY A SUPER HERO FAR SUPERIOR TO YOU, GRANNY!
GNNH!
OH NO! THE FORCE OF THAT BLOW BROKE MY THREAD!
SNAP!
I'M FALLING!
THINK FAST, MAY PARKER! DO SOMETHING!

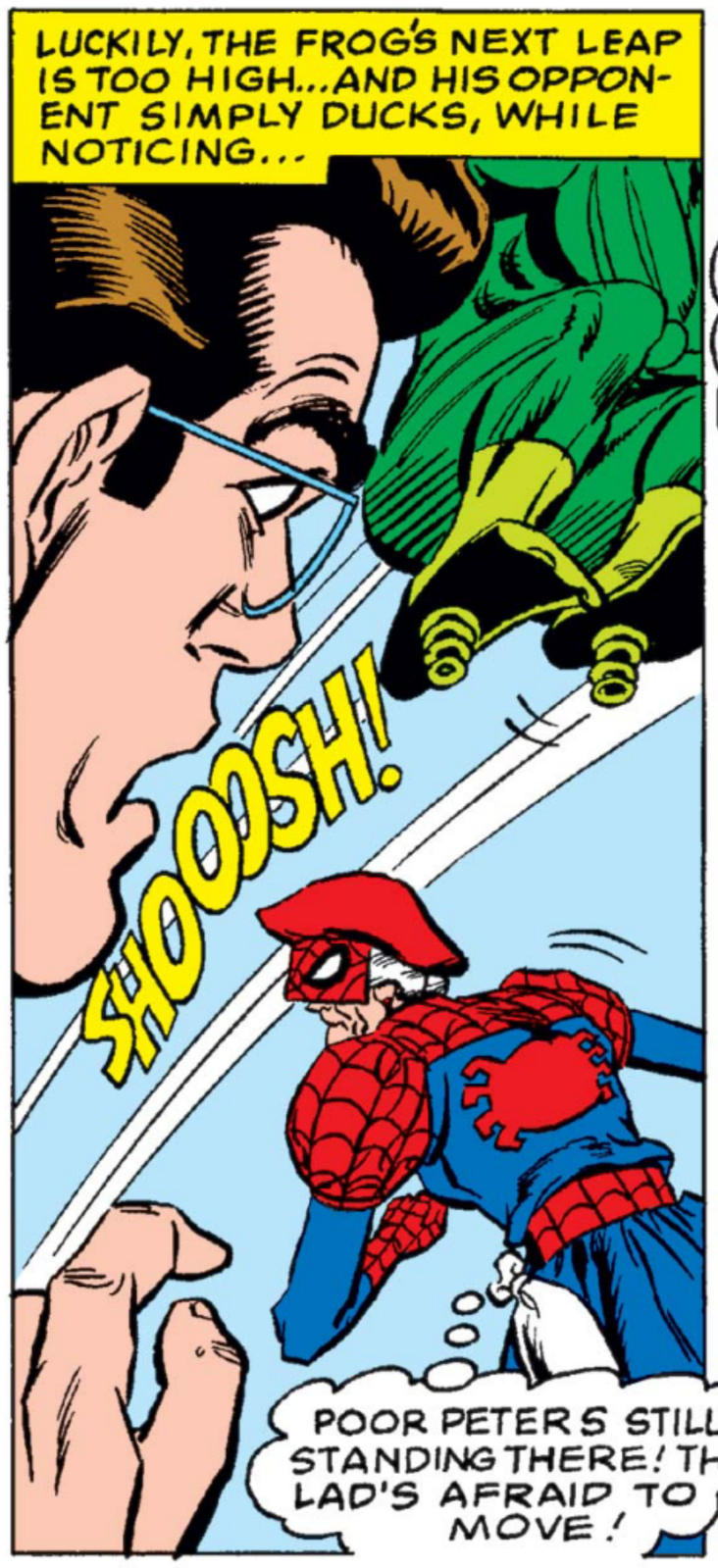

THIS IS NOT WHAT I DESIGNED THIS WEAPON FOR--
HOWEVER, AS THE YOUNGER GENERATION MIGHT SAY: "ANY PORT IN A STORM!"
SSKLOOSH!


PLOOMPHF!

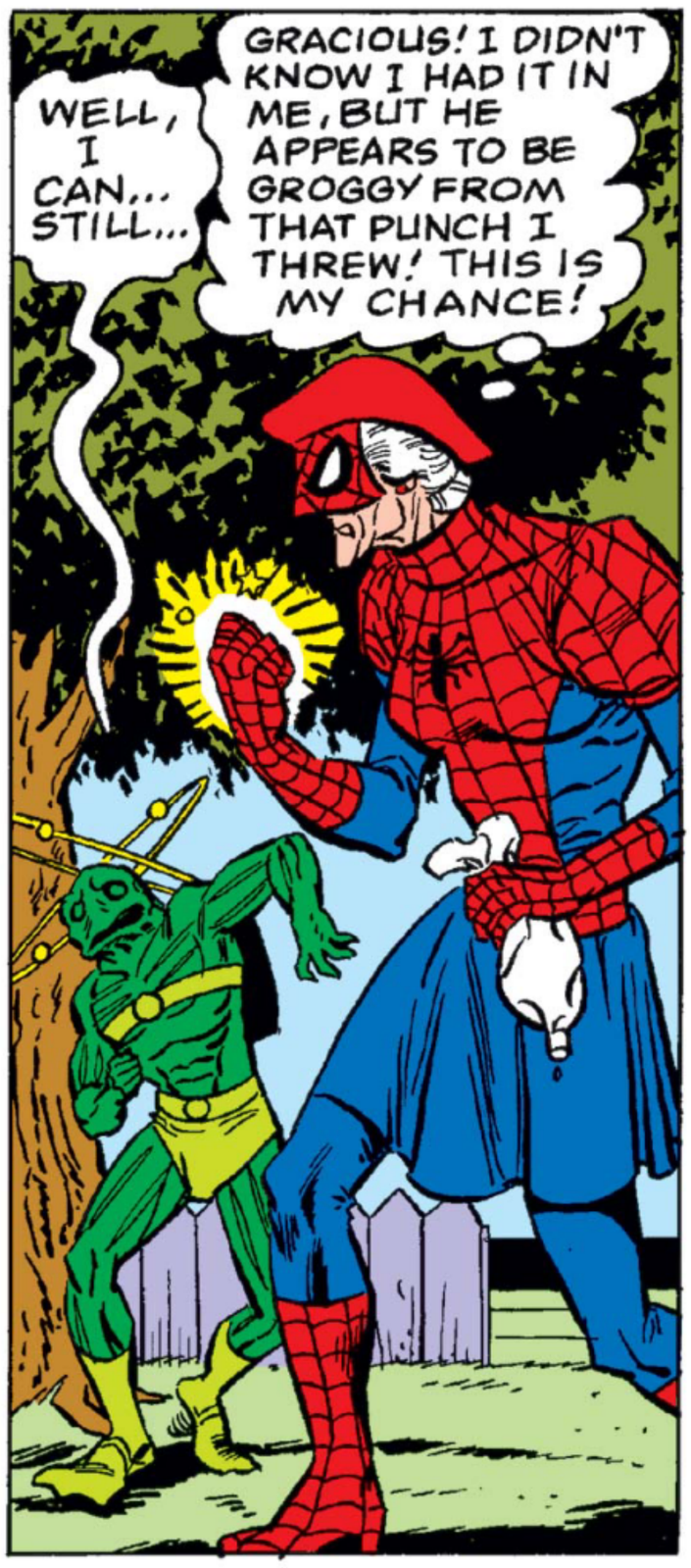

LANDSAKES ALIVE! OF ALL THE CRAZY PLACES TO LAND-- RIGHT IN MY OWN BACK YARD--LITERALLY!
AND HERE COMES THE LEAP FROG! IT WOULD APPEAR HE'S FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT GETTING AWAY! APPARENTLY, FINISHING THIS FIGHT IS ALL HE'S CONCERNED WITH!

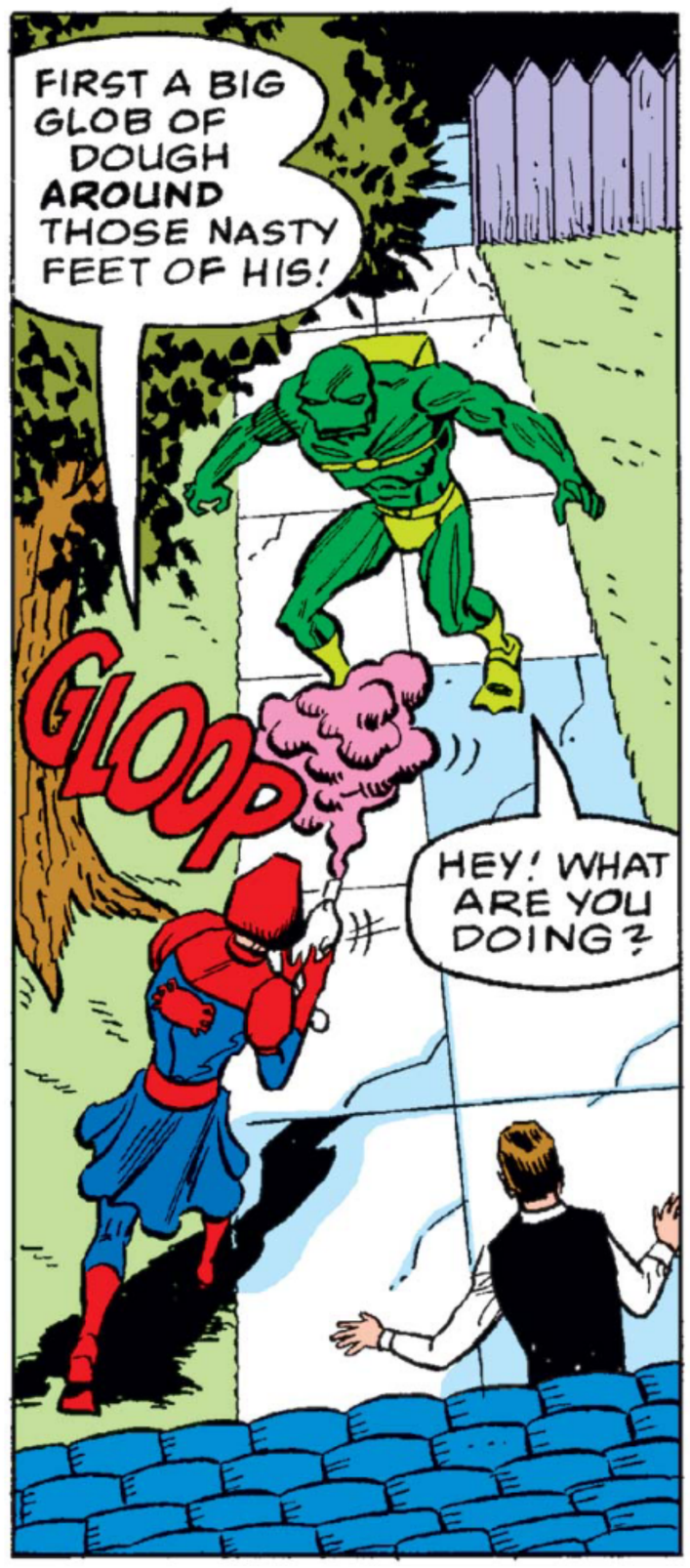

BUT IF A FIGHT IS WHAT HE WANTS--
HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON OUT HERE? YOU TWO CAN'T--
OH NO! PETER! I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO BE HOME FROM HIS FIELD TRIP SO SOON!

DISTRACTED BY THE SIGHT OF HER NEPHEW, THE LITTLE OLD SPIDER-LADY LEAVES HERSELF WIDE OPEN FOR A ROUND-HOUSE BLOW...
POW!

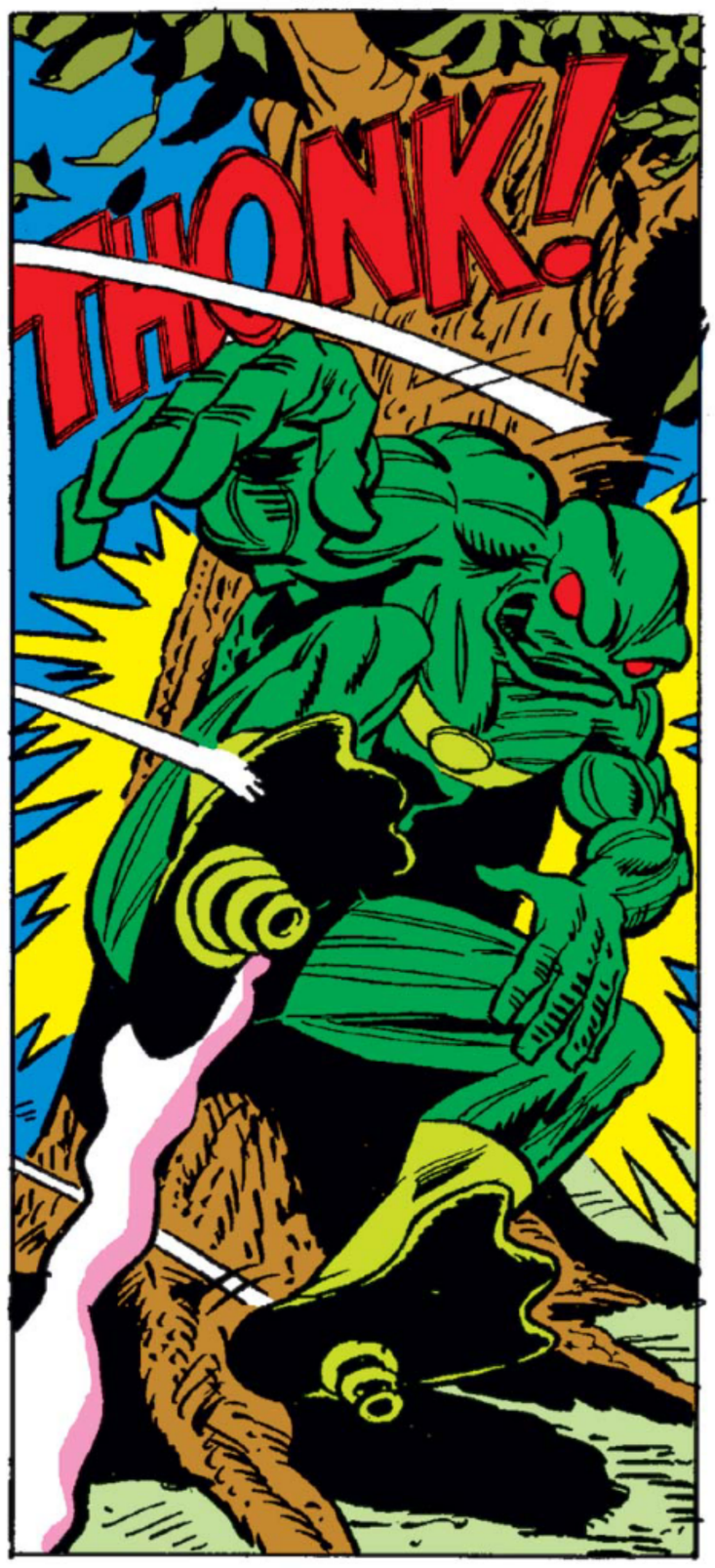

LUCKILY, THE FROG'S NEXT LEAP IS TOO HIGH...AND HIS OPPONENT SIMPLY DUCKS, WHILE NOTICING...
SHOOOSH!
POOR PETER'S STILL STANDING THERE! THE LAD'S AFRAID TO MOVE!

AND THIS DRATTED AMPHIBIAN HAS GONE FROG-WILD--JUMPING ALL AROUND LIKE A MAD-MAN!
PETER'S SURE TO GET HIT AND HURT --UNLESS I DO SOMETHING FAST!
UNNGH! SO YOU'RE STILL WITH IT, HUH, LADY?
WAK!

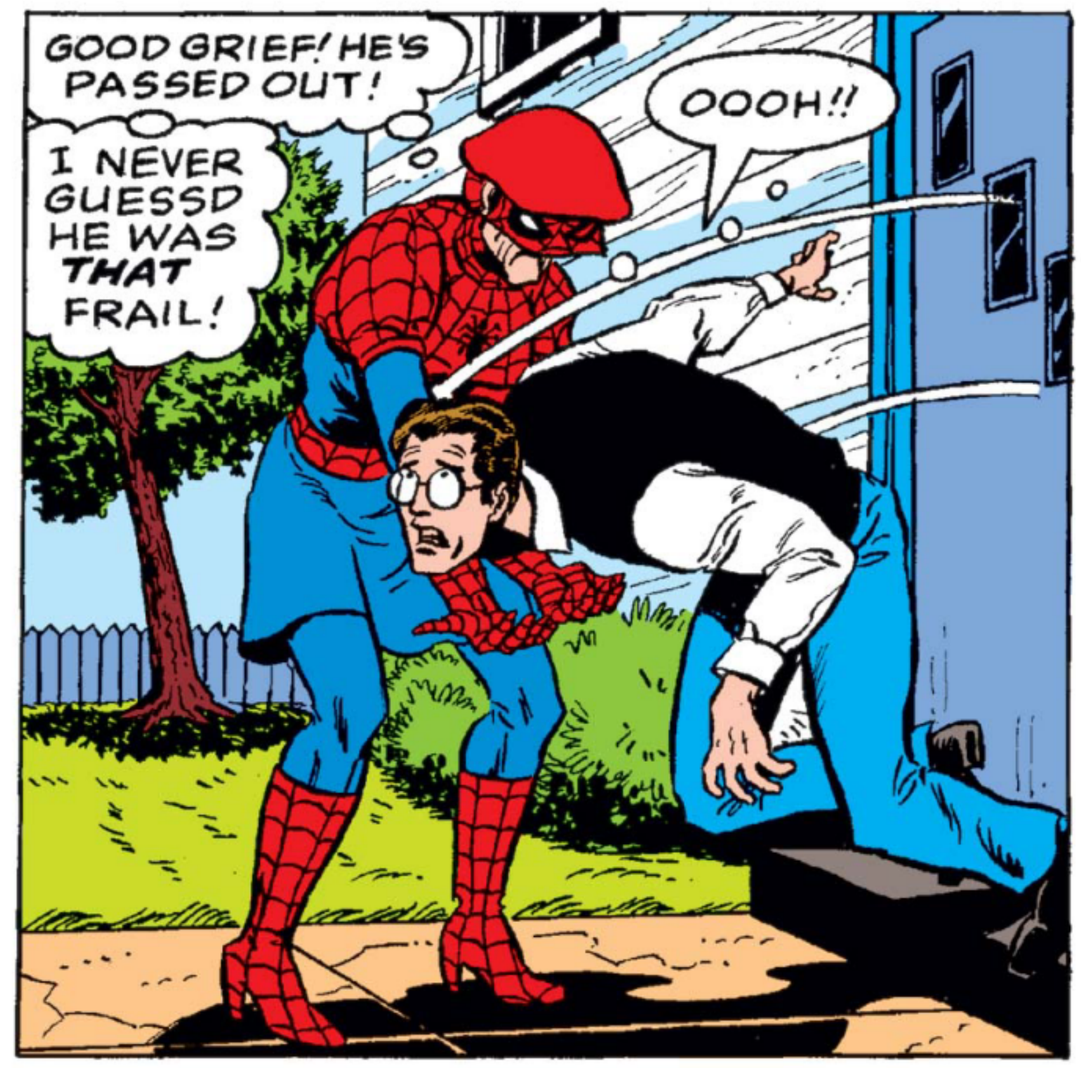

WELL, I CAN... STILL...
GRACIOUS! I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD IT IN ME, BUT HE APPEARS TO BE GROGGY FROM THAT PUNCH I THREW! THIS IS MY CHANCE!

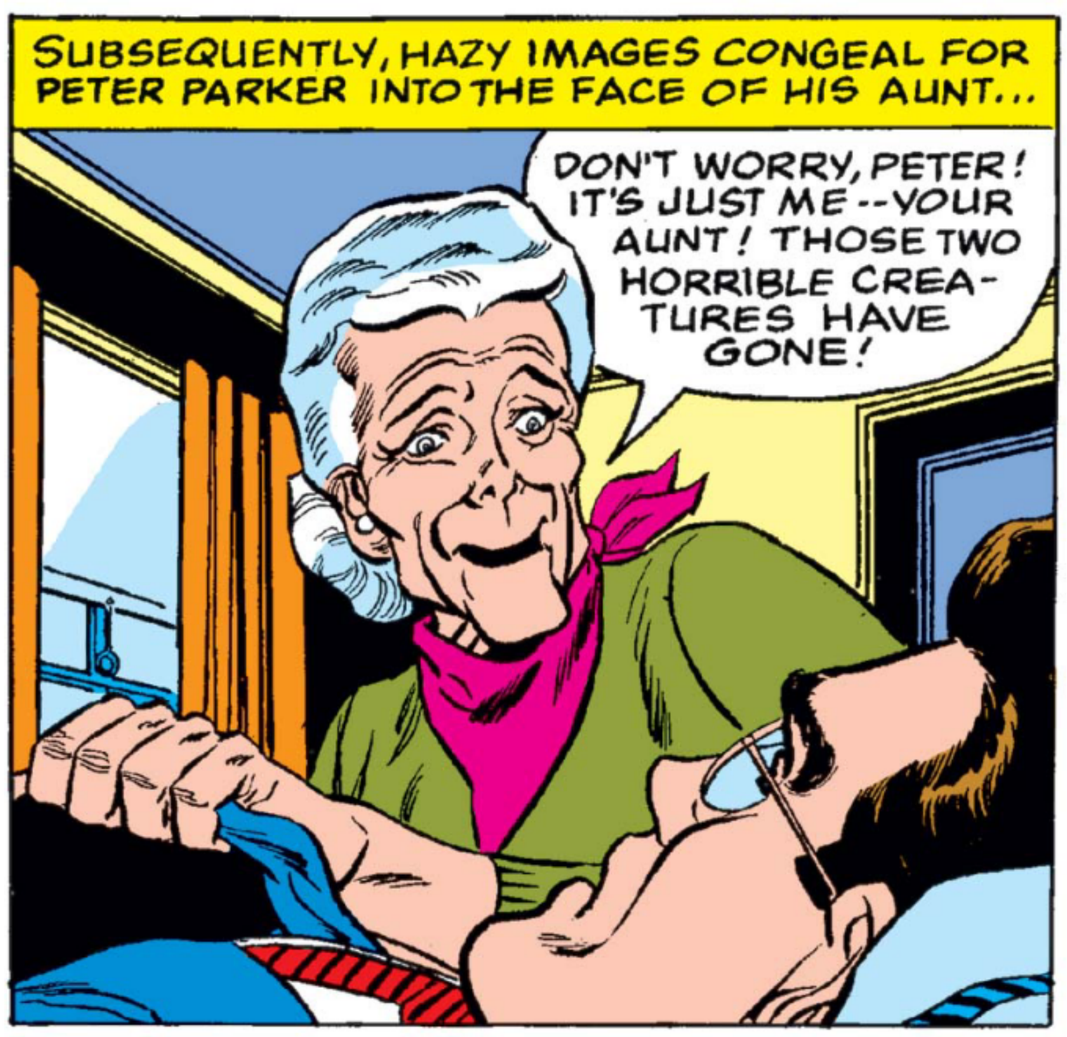

FIRST A BIG GLOB OF DOUGH AROUND THOSE NASTY FEET OF HIS!
GLOOP
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THEN...
EYOW!


THONK!

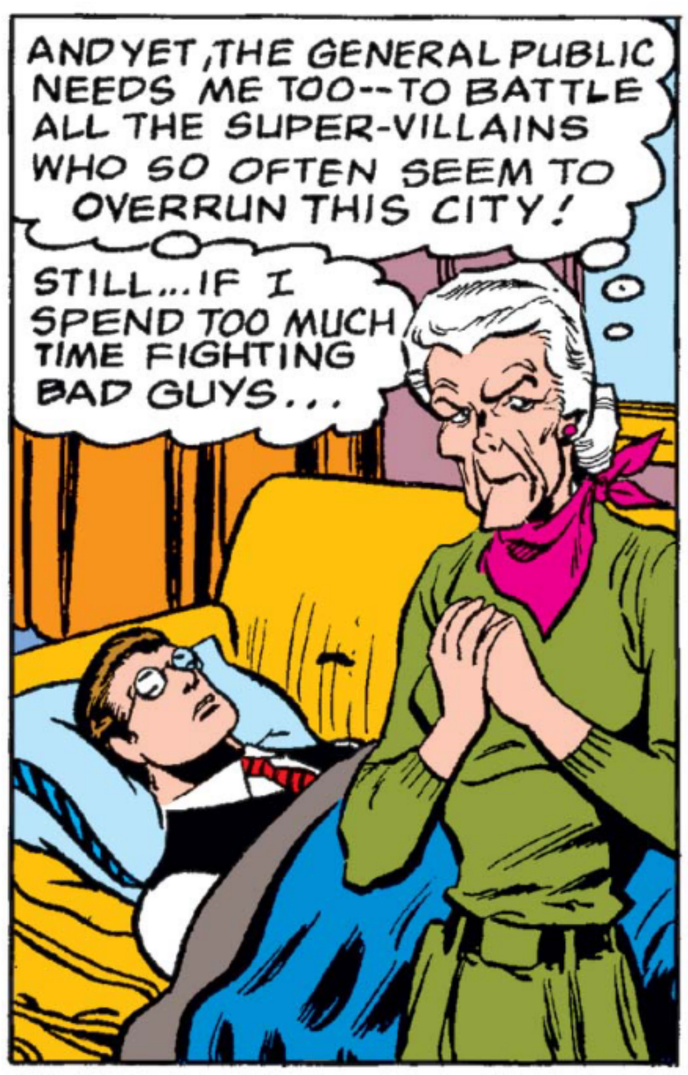
ALL RIGHT, YOUNG MAN! THE LEAPFROG IS DOWN FOR THE COUNT! NOW AS FOR YOU--
NO! STAY AWAY FROM ME, YOU HORRIBLE MONSTER! YOU'RE-- YOU'RE...


GOOD GRIEF! HE'S PASSED OUT!
I NEVER GUESSD HE WAS THAT FRAIL!
OOOH!!


SUBSEQUENTLY, HAZY IMAGES CONGEAL FOR PETER PARKER INTO THE FACE OF HIS AUNT...
DON'T WORRY, PETER! IT'S JUST ME--YOUR AUNT! THOSE TWO HORRIBLE CREATURES HAVE GONE!

THE POLICE TOOK AWAY ONE! AND THE OTHER ONE LEFT ON HER OWN ACCORD!
NOW, I WANT YOU TO LIE BACK DOWN, GET SOME MORE SLEEP, YOU'VE HAD A TRYING DAY!

AND, AS HER NEPHEW COMPLIES..
NOW WHAT DO I DO?
I ALWAYS KNEW PETER WAS SENSITIVE, BUT I NEVER KNEW HE WAS THIS SENSITIVE! HE NEEDS ME TO STICK BY HIM... TAKE CARE OF HIM!


AND YET, THE GENERAL PUBLIC NEEDS ME TOO--TO BATTLE ALL THE SUPER-VILLAINS WHO SO OFTEN SEEM TO OVERRUN THIS CITY!
STILL... IF I SPEND TOO MUCH TIME FIGHTING BAD GUYS...

...I MIGHT WELL LET PETER DOWN... NOT CARE FOR HIM AS I SHOULD!
CAN I POSSIBLY BE FAIR ABOUT DIVIDING MY TIME BETWEEN THESE TWO RESPONSIBILITIES?
WELL... I GUESS ONLY TIME WILL TELL!
END

WHY NOT?

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

DENNIS O'NEIL
EDITOR
MARK GRUENWALD
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Once again, we've managed to come up with a WHAT IF which the sweeping majority of our cavorting correspondents seemed to be wild about! The issue in question is *"What If the Avengers fought the Kree-Skrull War Without Rick Jones?"*— certainly one of the more ambitious tales we've done to date since the events of that issue were reprised from the *nine*-part saga in AVENGERS #89-97. But before we get to your commentary, we'd like to clear up something for those of you who wrote in to take us to task for Daredevil's costume appearing blue rather than red on page 38, panel 2. First of all, it was not ignorance or carelessness on the part of any one of your beleaguered bullpenners that caused the error. When it left the office, o:' DD's threads were colored correctly. However, the separators (our pals at the printing plant who take our color-guides and make the plates that print our four-color comics) figured they'd do us a favor by "correcting" that panel that someone deemed was wrong. Rest assured that the separator was duly chastised for his overzealousness, and promises not to let it happen again. All clear? Good. And now, to the mail...

Dear Marvel,

How did you do it? How did you take a seemingly hormal intergalactic war and make it seem so interesting and enjoyable? Good gosh, after reading a story like WHAT IF #20, what with the way it gets your adrenalin going, a guy could really get psyched into enlisting in the space patrol! You see, I have never read the original story upon which the issue was based, and I just can't imagine that it could have been as exciting as this. For one thing, the Avengers probably had a much easier win than they did here.

I loved the way you brought in so many guest stars to help the Avengers defend Earth — Spider-Man Daredevil, the Fantastic Four, the Inhumans, Black Panther, and so on.. Also your portrayal of Captain Marvel made me like him a lot more than I ever have before.

So I'd just like you to know that this issue ranks up there with my all-time favorite Marvel comics.

Noel Mayeske
6410 Tahoe Dr.
Atlanta, GA 30349

Tom DeFalco, Alan Kupperberg, and Bruce Patterson all thank you for your kind words on their WHAT IF outing, Noel. You weren't the only one to compare it to the original, though. For instance...

Dear Tom, Alan, and Bruce,

It took nearly ten years to erase the stigma attached to the Kree/Skrull War after Roy ruined his epic with the cop-out ending involving Rick Jones' sudden mental powers. However, WHAT IF #20 provides us at last with the only reality worthy of being considered as part of our Marvel Universe.

Jeffrey Lowndes
809 Sunset St.
Scranton, PA 18509

Well, Jeff, you're entitled to your opinion, but we think you judge the original epic rather harshly. Be that as it may, we are, of course, pleased that you thought our ending was better than the original. It's always our goal to outdo ourselves, after all. To be fair, though, here's a reader who was a little less than boggled...

Dear WHAT IF Crew,

What a shame. WHAT IF #20 had a chance of being the most all-encompassing, spectacular, and shocking tale in the history of comics. When most of the heroes and villains were summoned to defend Earth, I actually felt a shudder down my spine. I thought at long last I would see an issue that featured *every one* of the super-beings in the Marvel Universe.

Well, what you gave me wasn't quite that. Though the ending was quite good, it was far below my expectations. I had hoped that there would have been a lot more casualties in such a spectacular space war. As it was, the only real casualty was Rick Jones, who got transformed into a cosmic being. Anyway, next time you do a story like this, don't be afraid of going all-out and bumping off a few of your heroes. It's only WHAT IF, you know.

Chris Bradley
1005 Devon Ct.
N. Augusta, SC 29841

You had us worried there, Chris. We thought you had something against our stalwart heroes, but apparently you only wnat to see their dimensional counterparts bite the dust now and then.

Dear Tom and Co.,

Congratulations on WHAT IF #20. You took one of the most celebrated Marvel epics, found its most pivotal moment, depicted another possible occurrence, and developed the ensuing events in a logical, natural style. You managed to abbreviate the lengthy Kree-Skrull War without losing any of its impact. If you can maintain this level of quality in future WHAT IFs, I can guarantee you a steady readership of at least one.

Deborah L. Rose
218 Seyber Dr.
Petersburg, VA 23803

Well, Deb, we'll probably need a bit larger readership than *one* to keep this book going, but we know what you mean and appreciate your taking the time to say it. Keep on reading. We've got even greater things in store.

HOW ABOUT?

WHAT IF... the Black Widow and Daredevil got married?
WHAT IF... the Silver Surfer still served Galactus?
WHAT IF... Professor X actually died in X-MEN #42?
WHAT IF... Wonder Man hadn't gone into suspended animation in AVENGERS #9?

—Tom Fineran
Cheverly, MD

WHAT IF... the X-Men had different mutant powers? **(The divergence would be in their mothers' wombs, and they might not resemble the heroes you know in any way.)**
WHAT IF... Rick Jones had become Captain America? **(A sequel to WHAT IF #5?)**

—David Holliday
Redondo Beach, CA

WHAT IF... Dr. Rinehart created an army of Captain Americas?
WHAT IF... the Hulk had remained in the Avengers?

—Cliff Vico
(no address on letter)

WHAT IF... Captain America had been discovered by the Fantastic Four rather than the Avengers?

—Steven Sawolkin
Olivette, MO

WHAT IF... the original X-Men had never quit?

—John B. Lawton
Las Vegas, NV

WHAT IF... Peter Parker had been bitten by a radioactive lady-bug?
WHAT IF... Peter Parker had been bitten by a radioactive bat?
WHAT IF... Peter Parker had been bitten by the Invisible Girl?
(Something tells us you're not taking these stories very seriously. —mg.)

Steve Billnitzer
(No address given)

Before we take our leave, we'd like to ask all you out there what you think of this issue's multiple story format. Personally, *we* think it's great, giving us a chance to give you more WHAT IF stories for your money. And next issue, we'll be upping our page count from 35 to 39, with no increase in price! And while you're telling us about our new format, how about an opinion on our spanking-new back-up series, "Untold Tales of the Marvel Universe"? As you can tell, we're working overtime to come up with new ways to give you, our loyal readers, more of what you want to see. Are we on the right track? Let's hear from you.

—mark gruenwald.